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# THE GREAT PILOT

AND

# HIS LESSONS.

BY THE

REV. RICHARD NEWTON, D. D.,

AUTHOR OF "RILLS FROM THE FOUNTAIN OF LIFE," "THE BEST THINGS," "THE KING'S HIGHWAY," "THE GIANTS," "SAFE COMPASS," "BIBLE BLESSINGS."

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# PREFACE.

THE office of a pilot is a very important one He goes on board of a vessel in order to carry her safely into the harbor which she desires to enter. There are, generally, many rocks and shoals and dangerous places about the entrance to a harbor. The captain, who has navigated his vessel across the ocean, is not always able to steer it through those difficult places. It requires the assistance of some one who has made this matter a subject of particular study and attention; who knows just where the deep, safe channel lies which the vessel should sail in; and where every rock and shoal lies which must be avoided. And this is the pilot's special business. For this purpose he takes the entire charge of the vessel. The captain gives up the control of it to him. He issues all the orders. He tells the men what to do; and it is only by obeying his orders, by minding his teaching, or following the pilot's lessons that they can get the ship safely into port.

And this is just what Jesus does for all his people. We are here, in this world, like vessels out at sea The harbor which we desire to reach is heaven.



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But there are many dangers to be passed through before we can enter that harbor. Without the help of a pilot, we never can get safely through those dangers. But Jesus is the only pilot who can teach us how to steer safely past every danger, and enter the harbor of heaven.

When our hearts are changed, and we become the servants of Jesus, he comes into our souls, just as the pilot goes on board of a vessel, which he is going to take into port. And when Jesus comes to us, in this way, he comes as "The Great Pilot." His object is to steer our souls safely into heaven. He may well be called "The *Great* Pilot," because his wisdom and power and goodness are so great.

The Bible is the book which he has given us, filled with his lessons. In *preaching* these sermons, at first, my chief desire was — and it is the same in *printing* them now — to tell about Jesus, and what he wants us to do; and therefore I have chosen this title for my book, — "THE GREAT PILOT, AND HIS LESSONS."

R. N

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# I.

## Mary's Choice; Or, The Good Portion.

Mary hath chosen the good part which shall not be taken away from her. — LUKE 10 : 42.

THE

# Great Pilot, and his Lessons.

## I.

**Mary hath chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her. — *Luke* 10 : 42.**

The Mary here spoken of was the sister of Lazarus, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. Lazarus had another sister besides Mary, and her name was Martha. It seems that these two sisters and their brother were living together by themselves, having lost their parents. The place of their residence was the little town of Bethany, a short distance from Jerusalem. We are told that "Jesus loved Mary, and her sister, and Lazarus." He was very fond of going to their house, and stopping there, when he was in that part of the country. The last three nights of

his life, before his crucifixion, he spent with this happy family at Bethany.

Those good sisters both loved Jesus very much, but they took a different way of showing their love. One time, when Jesus was making a visit at their house, Martha thought she would show Jesus how much she loved him, by getting up a nice supper for him, and preparing a great many good things for him to eat. But Mary thought that Jesus didn't care so much about eating and drinking, and she chose to show her love to him, by sitting down at his feet, and listening attentively to what he was saying. By and by, Martha got worried about something or other, and when she saw Mary sitting quietly down by the side of Jesus, she felt vexed. Presently she came to Jesus, in rather an ill-humor, and said, "Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? Bid her, therefore, that she help me." I suppose she thought that Jesus would feel just as she did about it. She, no doubt, expected that he would turn to Mary, and say, "Mary, why do you sit idling

here? Do go, and help your sister in her work." But, instead of this, Jesus turned to Martha, and said, in the way of gentle reproof, "Martha, Martha, thou art careful, and troubled about many things. But *one thing* is needful; and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her."

*The good part which Mary had chosen was to love and serve Jesus.* Our sermon to-day is about *Mary's choice;* or, *the good portion.*

Suppose that God should send an angel to you with an offer of two things; one of these is a fortune of a hundred thousand dollars; the other is the grace which will make you a Christian, and help you to love and serve Jesus here in this life, and then be happy with him in heaven at last. Well, the angel comes to you and asks you to make your choice. You have to make up your mind to take one or the other. If you take the money, then that is your choice, your part, your portion. If you take the grace of God, which will make you a Christian, then *that* is your choice Like

Mary, you have chosen the good portion Now, why is that choice, which Mary made, called a good part, or a good portion? This is the question for us to consider. I wish to speak of *four* reasons why it may be thus called. Remember that Mary's choice was loving and serving Jesus.

*The first reason why this is a good choice, or portion, is that it* IS WHAT GOD WANTS US TO CHOOSE.

God knows what is good for us a great deal better than we do. If we only let him choose for us, and follow his choice, we shall be sure to be satisfied and happy. For instance, when God first made the angels, he wanted them to live forever with him in heaven, and be happy. He gave them all the joys and pleasures of heaven to make them happy. Surely they ought to have been satisfied with this. For a while they were all satisfied, and perfectly happy. But after a time some of them began to feel dissatisfied with their position. They thought they could choose better for themselves. They wanted to *alter* their por-

tion. They *did* alter it. And what was the result? Instead of being holy angels, living in the light and joy and happiness of heaven, they became fallen angels, foul fiends, wicked devils, and were cast, in chains of darkness, down to the bottomless pit. But those angels who were satisfied with God's choice are in heaven yet. They are holy, happy angels still.

And then, you know, in the first chapters of the Bible we read about Adam and Eve. God made them pure and good. He put them in the garden of Eden. It was a beautiful place. There were soft, velvet lawns, and cool, shady groves; trees bending with rich, ripe fruit, and flowers of every kind and description filling the air with their delightful fragrance. There were fountains playing, and beautiful streams gliding softly along, and birds singing in the trees, and beasts, not wild, but tame and harmless as the gentle lamb, all playing pleasantly around. Oh, what a charming place that must have been! There was every possible thing that was necessary to make them happy.

That was the choice God had made for them, and the "good part" or portion which he had prepared for them. If they had only been satisfied with God's choice, they might have remained there to this day perfectly happy. They were satisfied and happy for a little while. But, by and by, Satan managed to get into that happy place. He began slyly to talk to them. He tried to make them feel dissatisfied with their condition. He told them that they could make a wiser choice than had been made for them, and secure a better part or portion for themselves. They listened to his voice. They chose for themselves another part or portion. And what was the result? They were turned out from that happy home, — that beautiful garden, — to live in this dark world of sorrow, sin, and death!

And it is just the same now. Those who take what God has chosen for them, — the part or portion he has prepared for them, — and are satisfied with it, are happy. Those who are not satisfied with that, but try to choose something different for themselves, are always wretched and miserable.

Suppose we go into the woods and look at the little birds. We hear them sing their merry songs as they flit, in the sunlight, from tree to tree. We see that they are just as happy as they can be. And why? Because they are satisfied with the portion God has chosen for them.

And now, suppose we go out to sea. Our vessel is far away from land. We hear one of the sailors cry out, "A school of porpoises!" We go to the bows of the vessel, and lean over and look at them. There we see hundreds upon hundreds of them. They are darting up and down, and playing about, like boys or girls just let out of school. Some are gliding gently along, while others are darting quickly about, as if they were playing tag, or hide and seek, in the water. You almost feel as if you would like to be a porpoise for about ten minutes, just to take a plunge into the water, and join in their fun. They are just as happy as fishes can be. And the reason of it is that they are satisfied with the part or portion that God has chosen for them.

But suppose that the birds of the air should dive into the sea, and try to share in the enjoyment of the fishes, — could they be happy there? Of course not. Or suppose that one of those porpoises should take a notion to try living on dry land awhile. Suppose he should try to climb up a tree, and balance himself on one of the branches, where the birds feel at home, and enjoy themselves so much in singing, — do you think the porpoise would find any pleasure in it? Oh, no. It would be perfect misery to him. He would die in the attempt, unless he could get back to the salt water pretty quick. But the little bird is happy up there among the trees; then why can't the fish be happy there, too? Because it is not the part or portion which God has chosen for him. God has chosen life in the air as the portion for the bird; and this is a good part for the bird, because it is God's choice for him. And God has chosen life in the water as the portion for the fish; and this is a good part for him, for the same reason. And the part which Mary chose, loving and

serving Jesus, is a good part or portion for us, *because it is that which God wants us to choose.*

*The second reason why this is a good part or portion for us, is because* THERE IS ENOUGH IN IT TO SATISFY OUR SOULS.

The great reason why so many people are unhappy in the world is that they love things, and choose them as their portion, that are too little to fill their souls and satisfy them. The things that we love, and think about most, — that we take as our portion, — are to our souls just what the things we eat and drink are to our bodies. They are the *food* of our souls. And if we don't love the right things, and thus get the right kind of food for our souls, we can't be happy, any more than we can be comfortable if we don't get the right kind of food for our bodies, and enough of it. Suppose you have a glass globe in your dining-room with a little gold-fish in it. In the morning you drop a crumb of bread, or the leg of a fly, or the tiniest little mite of meat into the water. The fish will snap it up in a minute. It makes a good breakfast of it, and flaps its

little tail in thankfulness, and feels completely happy. But suppose, when you take your seat at the table, you find just one little crumb of bread for your breakfast, like that you just gave the fish. And suppose that was all you could get. Would you feel very comfortable? No. You would feel very *un*comfortable. You would be weak and faint, and hunger would be gnawing at your stomach all the time. That crumb of bread was not enough to fill your stomach and satisfy your hunger.

There is the little humming-bird. Its body is hardly larger than your little finger. It has a long, slender bill, like a piece of wire. It thrusts this bill into the cup of a flower, two or three times, and sips up the honey which it finds there, and this gives it a hearty meal, that satisfies the humming-bird and makes it completely happy. But suppose, now, you set that morsel of honey before the huge *eagle*, when he comes swooping down from his home on the top of the mountain. Could he make a meal of it? No; it is not the kind of food he wants, and, if it were, there is not enough of it

Suppose you stick a fine needle in the end of your finger, and squeeze out a drop of blood. If a mosquito should light on your finger, that drop of blood would make a meal that would satisfy him. But let a hungry lion come stalking by, lashing his sides with his tail, and with fire flashing from his eyes, — would he be satisfied with a drop of blood? No. Nothing less than a sheep or a goat or a deer would make a meal for him. Well, here we see that small bodies are satisfied with a small portion of food, while large bodies require a large portion of food to satisfy them.

If I ask you how much food will be enough to satisfy an animal, you will want first to know how large the animal is.

And so, if you are asked to tell what will make a good portion for a soul, — that is, what will be enough to satisfy it and make it happy, — you can't tell till you know how large the soul is. But how can you tell how large the soul is? We can tell in a minute how large our bodies are. We can take the measure of the body, from head to foot, and round the

waist, and tell exactly what its size is. But no one ever saw a soul. Is there any way, then, of finding out how large the soul is? Yes; we can tell how large it is by finding out what will satisfy it or make it happy. I do not mean what will satisfy it for an hour or a day, or a month or a year, but what will satisfy it and make it happy while we live, when we die, after death, forever. Now tell me, do you think one hundred thousand dollars would do this? Would five hundred thousand? Would a million? Would all the money in the world? Would the whole world and everything in it? No. Then, does not this show that our souls are very large? Yes; they are so large that nothing less than God can satisfy them. If we love and serve Jesus, *this* will satisfy our souls and make them happy forever.

"James, come with me," said a gentleman to his little boy, one Sunday afternoon; "I'm going to take a walk."

They started. After walking a while, they came to a poor, miserable-looking little house. There were only two rooms in it, one above the

other. They clambered up a sort of ladder to the second story. When they entered that room, James thought that it was the poorest and most wretched-looking place he had ever seen. There was no carpet on the floor. Two or three rickety chairs, an old broken table, and an old bedstead, to match it, in one corner, were all that the room contained. On that bed lay a poor old woman. James's father went up to the side of the bed, and began to talk with the old woman. The little fellow was surprised to hear her speak cheerfully and seem to be quite happy. After a while, James said, —

"Please, ma'am, will you tell me what it is that makes you seem so happy? You have to stay here all by yourself; you are sick and have very little to eat. What is it can make you happy?"

"My dear child," said she, "I am left alone in the world. I am old and poor and sick. I often have nothing but dry bread to eat, and cold water to drink. Yet I am happy. The reason of it is that I love the Lord Jesus Christ.

I know he loves me, I feel that he is here with me; and *this* makes me happy. I was just thinking, when you came in, of that passage in the Bible, in which Jesus says, 'I will be a husband to the widow, and a father to the fatherless;' and I can't tell you how much comfort it gave me."

This old woman had followed Mary's example. She was loving and serving Jesus. She had chosen this as her part, or portion, and she found it a good part, or portion, *because there was enough in it to satisfy her soul.*

*The third reason why this is a good portion is that it is* SO SURE.

When a man becomes very rich, in this world, we say he has made his fortune. He has got a large amount of money, or property. *That* is called *his portion.* But how very uncertain worldly riches are! The Bible says, they "take to themselves wings and fly away." Our hold upon them is not stronger than it would be if it was made of that fine, delicate thread which the spider weaves.

I know a clergyman, in our church, who was

a physician when he was a young man. He had married a wife who was very beautiful and very rich. He had, through her, a large fortune, or portion of worldly property. He had a lovely little babe, too. He had everything the world could give to make him happy; but, he was not loving and serving Jesus. Now, that young man's part, or portion, seemed like a good one; but, ah! how *un*certain it was! One day a friend was visiting him. He showed him his elegant house; he pointed to his lovely wife, and sweet little babe, and said to his friend, "I am just as happy as I can be." But in *one short week* from that time, that beautiful wife and that lovely babe were in their graves. Wife — child — property — all gone in a week! What a sad change for that poor young physician! The worldly portion that he had chosen seemed to be a good one; but it was *not sure*. And this is the case with all earthly portions. *We* may have them to-day, but no one can tell *who* may have them to-morrow. But if we choose Mary's part, if we love and serve Jesus, we choose a portion

that is good because it is so sure. Jesus said of the good part which Mary chose, that "it should not be taken away from her." And if we make this choice, he will say the same of us. If we love and serve Jesus, and commit our souls to him, he will take care of us, and not let us be lost. Satan may try to entice us away from him, but Jesus wont let him succeed. If we forget him and fall into sin, Jesus will punish us and bring us back to him, just as a father does his child when he does wrong, but he wont forsake us or suffer us to be lost. He wont let the good part be taken away from us, after it has once been truly chosen.

Some years ago there was a good minister in England whose name was John Newton. He had a dream once, which illustrates very nicely this part of our subject. In his dream Mr. N. thought he was on board a ship, which was lying at anchor, in the Bay of Naples. He was leaning over the side of the vessel, looking at the city, which lay off in the distance, with Mount Vesuvius behind it, when a beautiful an-

gel came to him and gave him a gold ring. He told him to take great care of that ring, and never to part with it on any account. He said that if he kept it safe, he would always be happy, and when he died, it would take him to heaven. Mr. N. promised the angel that he never would part with the ring as long as he lived. Then the angel left him.

Soon after he was gone, another person came up to him, looking very different from the angel. He entered into conversation with Mr. N. By and by he saw the ring which the angel had given him upon his finger. Then he asked some questions about it. Mr. N. told him how the ring was given to him, and how his happiness and salvation depended on his keeping it safely. The stranger laughed at him. Then he told him what a foolish thing it was to think that keeping that ring would make him happy in this world, or take him to heaven at last. He went on talking in this way, and said so much about it, that at last Mr. N. began to feel ashamed of himself. And finally, at the stranger's suggestion, he

actually took the ring from his finger, and dropped it into the sea.

He had no sooner done so than his tempter turned and reproached him for his folly. He told him, that in throwing away that ring, he had thrown away his happiness, and lost his soul. Poor Mr. N. was in great distress. Then he dreamed that his angel friend came back. He plunged into the water, just where the ring had been dropped in. Presently he came up with the ring in his hand. Mr. N. shouted for joy when he saw the ring, and eagerly reached out his hand to take it again. But the angel said, "No, I can't trust it to you any more. If I should, you might lose it again. I will keep it for you, and then it will be safe."

When Mr. N. awoke he saw that this angel represented Jesus. The tempter represented Satan, and the ring represented the good portion which he had chosen in becoming a Christian. This portion is a good one because *it is sure*. Jesus is the keeper of it, and that which he keeps is perfectly safe. The third

reason why this is a good portion is that it is *so sure.*

*The fourth and last reason why it is a good portion is that it is* SO LASTING.

Earthly portions never can be made lasting. They pass away just like the things that we see when we are dreaming.

There was once a great king. On the day on which he was to be crowned, he made a grand holiday. The soldiers marched in procession round the palace. All the noblemen of his kingdom were there, dressed in their splendid robes. Bands of music were playing, and colors were streaming in the wind, and everything looked bright and beautiful. As the king looked upon this grand sight, he was delighted; and, turning to one of his attendants, he said, "Isn't it *perfectly* glorious?"

"Please your Majesty," said the gentleman, "one thing is wanting, to make it perfect."

"What is that?" asked the king.

"*Continuance*," was the answer.

It wasn't lasting. It wouldn't continue. The day would soon pass away. The soldiers

would go home. The music would stop playing. The colors would be furled. The nobles and princes would go away, and lay aside their glittering robes. Dark night would spread its gloomy pall over the scene, and all that dazzling glory would vanish away. The next day it would only be remembered like a dream. And it is just so with all earthly portions. They are not lasting. There are a great many beautiful things in this world, but they do not last. How beautiful the rainbow is, when we see it stretching its great arch across the dark clouds, after a storm! How beautiful the flowers are when they come out with all their varying colors, and fill the air with fragrance! How beautiful the western sky is when the sun is setting, and his beams gild all the clouds with glory like that of heaven! You get up, on one of these cold, winter mornings, and go to the window of your chamber. The frost has been at work there. You look at it with delight. There you seem to see gardens and forests and houses and temples and palaces all glittering and spark-

ling as though they were made of diamonds. But will any of these things last? No. While you are looking at the rainbow it fades away. In a very short time the beautiful flowers all wither. As soon as the sun is set, the glory he had spread over the cloud grows dim, and disappears. Just breathe upon that frosted window, and all the beautiful work upon it melts away.

And so it is with the portions that people have in this world. They cannot last. But if we choose Mary's part, if we love and serve Jesus, we have a portion that will last *forever*. How long? *Forever*. That is a little word. It is soon spoken. But who can tell *how long* forever is? Suppose that the walls and ceiling of this church were all made of slate, and suppose we should take a pencil and make lines of figures, one above the other, till the whole surface was covered with these figures. What a multitude of them there would be! And suppose that each one of those figures should stand for a thousand years; would that make forever? No.

When you have been at the seashore you have often taken up a handful of sand. Could you count how many grains of sand there are in a handful? Could anybody tell *how many* grains of sand there are all round the ocean's shore? But suppose each single grain of sand there stood for a thousand years, would that be equal to *forever?* No, for if one grain of sand were taken away from the ocean's shore, every one thousand years, the time would come at last, when every grain would be gone. But that would only be the beginning of forever. And must not that be a good portion that will last as long as this? Well, if we love and serve Jesus we shall have a portion of happiness that will last forever. This is a good portion because it is *so lasting.*

Thus, we have spoken of four reasons why this is a good portion. The first is, that it *is what God wants us to choose.* The second is, *that there is enough in it to satisfy our souls.* The third is, that *it is so sure;* and the fourth is, that *it is so lasting.*

Now what did Jesus say that Mary did in

reference to this portion? He said she had *chosen* it. She thought about it. She prayed over it, and then she made up her mind to take it as her portion. This means that she determined to love and serve Jesus. Whatever others did, she resolved to be a Christian. And this is what each one of you should do, my dear children. You must make this choice for yourself. Nobody can make it for you. You are old enough to make it, as soon as you know that you are a sinner, and that Jesus died to save you. You may make the choice to-day, if you will. You can't make it of yourself, but if you pray to Jesus he will help you. There is a beautiful hymn which suits very well to finish this sermon with. How earnestly I pray that God may teach each of you to express your own desire and feeling in the language of this hymn, and say, —

"Beset with snares, on every hand,
In life's uncertain path I stand;
Saviour divine, send down thy light,
And guide my doubtful footsteps right.

Engage this young and sinful heart
To fix on Mary's better part:
And scorn the trifles of a day,
For joys that never fade away."

"Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her."

# II.

## Doing for Jesus.

Ye have done it unto me — Matt. 25 : 40.

# II.

Ye have done it unto me. — *Matt.* 25 : 40.

Jesus spoke these words. Can you tell me where Jesus is now? In heaven, sitting at the right hand of God. Is Jesus ever going to come back to this world? Yes. What will he come for? to judge the world. Yes. And when Jesus said, "Ye have done it unto me," he was telling his disciples what he would do when he came to judge the world. He said he would come in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. All the holy angels will come with him. He will sit upon a glorious high throne. His people will all be gathered before him, and he will judge them. An account will be given before all the angels of heaven, of everything that they have done. Jesus will mention all the good things his people have done to show their love for him, as for instance when they fed the hungry, and

clothed the naked, and visited the sick, and comforted the sorrowing, and made their offerings to send the gospel to the heathen, and he will kindly say, of each of these things, "Ye have done it unto me." Oh, how happy it will make us feel when we come to stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, to have the glorious Saviour speak of the teachers and scholars who have given their time and labor and money in trying to do good, and hear him say, "*Ye have done it unto me.*" Now this doesn't mean that giving our money to the poor, or any other good deeds that we may do, will take us to heaven. Nobody will ever go to heaven for any good works *they* can do. If they could, those works would be their Saviour. But Jesus is the *only* Saviour. If we get to heaven at last it will only be *because of what Jesus has done for us*, and not because of anything we do ourselves. Well, you may ask, what, then, is the use of trying to do good? Let me tell you. In heaven there are some places nearer to Jesus than others; there are some golden crowns more beautiful than others,

more full of bright and sparkling jewels; and those brightest crowns, those places nearest to Jesus, will be given to those of his people who have done the most to please him, and tried to serve him best. Oh, this is reason enough why we should try to do all the good we can. Nothing done from love to Jesus is ever lost. If we give "even a cup of cold water to one of the least of his followers we shall in no wise lose our reward." Our sermon to-day is about *doing for Jesus*. I wish to give you *four* reasons why we should be doing for him.

*The first reason why we should be doing for Jesus is*, BECAUSE HE HAS DONE SO MUCH FOR US.

But who can tell *how much* Jesus has done for us? He made this world for us to live in. He hung up that sun yonder, like a great lamp in the sky, to give us light. He spread out that beautiful sky, to be like a curtain of blue over our heads. He spread the green grass abroad, to be like a soft velvet carpet under our feet. He made the clouds and the stars, the hills and the valleys, the trees and the

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flowers, the babbling brooks and the singing birds, so that wherever we go we may have something pleasant to see and hear. Jesus made our parents to take care of us, and our friends to be kind to us. Everything pleasant and comfortable about us we owe to Jesus. And if this were all that Jesus has done for us, it would be reason enough why we should do all we can for him. But this is not all; it is not half; it is not the hundredth part of what Jesus has done for us. Oh, it was a very easy thing for him to make the world and all that is in it. This only cost him a little breath. All he had to do was just to speak, and it was done exactly as he wanted it. He said, "Let there be light," and in a moment "there was light." "Let there be trees," and at once the trees appeared, full-grown. "Let there be flowers," and at his word ten thousand different kinds of flowers came forth, smiling in their loveliness. It didn't cost Jesus much to *make* us. But, when we had ruined ourselves by sin, he undertook to save us, and *that* cost him, we never can begin to tell how much. See,

yonder is a stable, away over in Bethlehem of Judea. A father and mother are sitting by the manger in that stable. In that manger a dear little babe is lying. And now look again. Some travellers come in. They are weary with their journey. Their home is far away in the East, hundreds of miles off. They have come to see this child, and bring presents of gold and spices to him. Yonder, outside of the town, are some shepherds keeping watch over their flocks by night. A bright light begins to shine around them. They hear voices speaking over their heads. They look up, and there is a company of angels. They have come from heaven to tell the shepherds about the birth of that child. What a wonderful child that is! Look at it as it lies sleeping there in the manger! It is just as weak and helpless as any other infant, and yet that child is *the great God:* that child is Jesus. He had always been in heaven before, where the angels of God worshipped him. Now he has become a helpless babe, the child of poor parents, and is lying with the beasts of the stall. It was nec-

essary that our Saviour should come into the world in this way; and Jesus was willing to do it that he might save us. And then he lived here for more than thirty years, so poor that he had no house of his own. He slept on other people's beds, and ate at other people's tables all his days, although he owned the whole world, and everything in it. How wonderful this was! And then, for years, he went about teaching and preaching and doing good. Then he was taken prisoner, and beaten on the bare back with cruel rods. They mocked him; they persecuted him; they put a crown of thorns on his head; they smote him; they spat upon him; they nailed him to the cross. He died a dreadful, lingering, torturing death. And he bore all this willingly to save our souls from hell. *This* is what Jesus did for us that we might go to heaven. How wonderful his love for us must have been! And when we think of all he has done for us, surely we should be glad to do all we can for him. This is the first reason we should be doing for Jesus, *because he has done so much for us.*

*The second reason why we should do so is, because of* THE HONOR OF DOING FOR HIM.

When Queen Victoria rides to the House of Parliament, on some great occasion, she wears her royal robes and the splendid crown of England, all sparkling with its rich jewelry, and she looks very grand. Suppose that you were in the crowd, admitted to the House of Parliament, on one of those occasions. You are standing not very far from the queen. By and by she looks toward you, and beckons you to come to her. You go up to the throne where she is sitting, and she asks you to get her a drink of water. Of course the queen never would do anything of the kind, for there are lords and ladies appointed to wait upon her, and get for her everything she wants. But I am *just supposing* a case, for the sake of illustration; and when we are supposing a case, we have a right to say anything that we please. You hand the queen a drink, in a golden cup, upon a golden waiter. When she has done drinking, she asks you to please stand there and fan her. You stand there and fan

her till the business is all accomplished, and the queen retires. Now, with our plain American notions, you might not think so much of this, but if you were an English boy or girl, you would think a wonderful deal of it. You would have done something for the queen that she had asked you to do. You would think *that* a great honor. Your name would be published in the papers the next day, as the boy or girl who fanned the queen when she was in the House of Parliament. People in England think it the greatest honor they can have, to get near the queen and do anything for her. But what is Queen Victoria, or what are all the monarchs in the world, put together, in comparison with Jesus? Jesus is our king. He is the king of heaven, as well as of earth. The angels worship him. He is the owner and ruler of all the worlds in the universe. Who can tell what an honor it is to be permitted to do anything for him? But when we have done anything for his poor, suffering people, Jesus says to us, "Ye have done it unto me." This is real honor: it is "the honor that cometh from God."

Some years ago, there was a distinguished military officer in England, whose name was Sir Ralph Abercrombie. He was a pious man, a member of the Presbyterian Church. When residing at the old family residence in Scotland, he was appointed an elder in the parish church in which he worshipped. One of the duties of an elder in the Presbyterian Church is, on communion days, to carry the bread and wine from the minister and put them into the hands of the members. When this brave and distinguished soldier heard of his appointment to this office, he wrote a note to his minister in these words: —

"Reverend Sir, — I have been intrusted by my king with many honorable and important offices in my profession as a soldier; and his majesty has been pleased to reward my services with distinguished honors; but to be permitted to put the bread and wine — the tokens of my Saviour's dying love — into the hands of one of the least of his followers, I consider to be the *highest honor* I can receive on this side of heaven." And the reason why

this brave soldier thought it such an honor was, that he was *doing it for Jesus.*

Some years ago an humble, but faithful minister of the gospel, went to Washington and called on the President. He did not call to ask an office, but to see the President. That President was a Christian man. He and this good minister had been brought together, some years before, under circumstances which made them love each other very much, and become real, warm-hearted friends for life. The President received him very kindly, and insisted on his coming to stay at the White House, while he was in Washington. He was put to lodge in the room in which General Harrison and General Taylor had died, while they were presidents. There the President would sometimes come to see him, toward midnight, and they would sit alone while talking together, not about politics, but about religion, about Jesus and his love, the things he has done for his people already, and the things he is going to do for them hereafter.

One morning, when the minister was going

out, the President told him he expected to have a public reception at twelve o'clock, when great crowds of people would come to see him, and he asked him to stay and help him receive his company. Of course he did so. He returned to the library, and waited till near noon. Then the President called for him, and they walked together towards the splendid East Room, in which the President is accustomed to receive his company. A great number of people were already on the outside of the house, waiting for the hour of admission. The President and his friend, the humble minister, were walking up and down the room, arm in arm, each occupied with his own thoughts. The minister was thinking of the exalted position of the man at his side. He was saying to himself, "He is called to preside over a vast and powerful country. Now he is waiting for the entrance of some of the greatest and most distinguished people in the land, who are coming to honor him by paying him their respects. What a happy man he must be! He has reached the high-

est position in the world. There is no nobler office than to be the president of a great and prosperous nation!"

The minister had not said a word; he had only been quietly thinking these thoughts. But the President seemed to understand what he was thinking about; for he kindly laid his arm on his friend's shoulder, and said: — "Yet, after all, my friend, *the man who preaches the gospel, and wins men to heaven has the highest office on earth.*"

But the reason why the office of the ministry is so honorable is, that it is an office all the service of which is done unto Jesus. But when others, who are not ministers, do anything for Jesus, they share in the same honor. When we make our offerings to help the poor, the sick, the sorrowing, or to send the gospel to the heathen, we seem to hear our Saviour say, "Ye have done it unto me." There is great honor in this. We should do what we can for Jesus, *because of the honor of doing for him.*

*Another reason why we should do for Jesus is because of* THE PLEASURE OF DOING FOR HIM

When we love anybody very much there is no greater pleasure in the world than to be doing anything we can for that person. When a mother has a dear little baby to attend to, she feels perfectly happy while nursing and dressing it, rocking it to sleep, and doing everything for it that she can. The baby may be very cross and fretful, it may cry and scream ever so much, but the mother pets and fondles it, and never gets tired of doing for it. You go to that mother, and ask her to go out on a pleasure-party, and leave her baby with you, and, if she is a real, true mother, she will say to you, "Thank you, but I'd rather not go. My greatest pleasure is to be with my dear child and take care of it." And if that mother is very poor, and has to work hard all day, how gladly she will do that work, because she feels that she is doing it for her darling child! And when she comes home at night, and takes the baby up in her arms, and he looks up into those loving eyes and smiles, she presses him to her bosom, and what pleasure she has when she thinks that what she

has been doing all day she has been doing for that dear child! What a blessed thing it is that God has made a mother's love for her children so very strong! Our mothers have so many things that are hard and disagreeable to do for us when we are little, that nothing but their great love for us would lead them to do those things. But a mother's *love* makes everything that she does for her child a pleasure.

And so it is with husbands and wives, and brothers and sisters, when they really love one another. You know we read in the Bible about Jacob. When he was a young man he went to make a visit to his Uncle Laban, and stayed there a long time. While he was there, he fell in love with his Cousin Rachel, who was a remarkably beautiful girl. Jacob asked his Uncle Laban if he might marry Rachel and have her for his wife. In those Eastern countries it was customary then, and is so still, for a young man, when he asked of a father permission to marry his daughter, to make a valuable present to the father. But Jacob was a poor

young man. He had a rich father, indeed, but he had set out to make his own fortune, and was not willing to go and ask his father's help. He had no money to give his Uncle Laban; so he offered to work for him for seven years as a shepherd. The life of a shepherd, in those days, was very hard and toilsome. He had to be out day and night, winter and summer, taking care of his flocks. And seven years were a long while to keep on working all the time. And yet we read that those seven long years seemed "but a few days to Jacob, because of his love for Rachel." When he was tired with his hard work, when he was exposed to the heat of summer or to the cold of winter, he would think to himself, "I am doing this for my dear Rachel;" and that thought would lighten his labor, and make everything he did a pleasure.

But no mother ever loved a child, and no husband ever loved a wife, as Jesus loves all his people. And when we learn to know him truly, we shall love him better than we love any one else. And if we do love him so, this

will make it a pleasure for us to do anything for him.

Some time ago a missionary meeting was held at a small town in England. At the close of the meeting a poor widow woman, one of the very poorest in the parish, went up to the minister and offered him a sovereign, — that is, a gold piece worth about five dollars. The minister knew the deep poverty of her condition, and declined to receive it. He told her she should not think of giving so much, for he knew she could not afford it. The poor woman looked sad and seemed greatly disappointed. "O sir," she said, "I have often given copper to my Saviour; and two or three times I had the pleasure of giving silver; but it has been my earnest desire to have the great happiness of giving some *gold* to Jesus once before I die. I have long been engaged in saving every little mite that I could spare that I might give this sovereign to Jesus, to-night. O sir, you must take it for Jesus' sake!"

Of course the minister could not resist such

an appeal. He took the widow's gold, and that poor woman went to her humble home that night, feeling that she was one of the happiest persons in the town. She had done what she could. She had given the best she had, a golden sovereign, — the only one she had, — to her Saviour. She had done it unto Jesus, and she felt perfectly happy in doing it. We ought to do all we can for Jesus, because of *the pleasure it affords.*

*The only other reason I will speak of why we should be doing for Jesus is because of* THE PROFIT IT YIELDS.

Some masters are very hard to serve. They try to get all the work they can out of people, and give them as little as possible in return. But it is very different with Jesus. He is the best master that any one can ever serve. When anybody is trying to do anything for him, he always takes hold and helps them himself, so as to make the work light, and then he rewards them in such a way as nobody else can ever do. When Jesus was on earth he told his disciples that when they did anything

out of love to him, or met with any loss on his account, he would make it up to them a hundred fold in this life, and in the world to come he would give them everlasting life.

Now to be paid over a hundred fold for what we do for Jesus is certainly a great profit. Let me show you how those who do anything for Jesus find profit in it here in this world.

One of the best kings that ever sat on the throne of England was Alfred the Great. Yet he had a great deal of trouble. The Danes overrun his kingdom; he was obliged to flee and live in the forest in disguise. One day when he was living thus, there came a beggar to his door, and asked for bread. The queen told Alfred that one loaf of bread was all they had, and she knew not when they would get any more.

"Give the poor man half the loaf," said Alfred. He who could feed five thousand with five loaves and two small fishes, can certainly make a loaf last for us till we get a fresh supply." So the beggar got half the loaf.

And what did the great and good Alfred get? His servants came in, soon after, with an abundant supply; and a favorable change took place in his affairs, and before long he recovered the possession of his kingdom.

Surely Alfred the Great was rewarded a hundred fold for that kind act. He did it to the Lord, and he found that there was profit in doing it to him.

I was reading lately about a good, faithful Christian man, who had a friend that was a philosopher, a very learned man. This good man often tried to persuade the philosopher to become a Christian. "If I become a Christian," said he, "I'm afraid I shall lose all I have in the world."

"Don't be afraid of that," replied the Christian. "Nobody ever lost by doing anything for Jesus. And if you should lose anything on his account, he is sure to make it up to you a hundred fold in the end."

"Well," said the philosopher, "are you willing to sign a bond, — a written agreement, — in the name of Christ, that if I be-

come a Christian, you will make up to me any loss I may suffer for the sake of Christ, if he does not make it up himself?"

"Yes," said the Christian, "I am perfectly willing to do that." So the writing was signed, and the philosopher said he would try to become a Christian. So he began diligently to read his Bible, and earnestly to pray to God to change his heart, and make him a true Christian. God heard his prayer. He sent his Holy Spirit to change the man's heart, and he became a real Christian. A good while after this, that philosopher was taken sick. The doctor said he could not live. He sent for his Christian friend, who had signed the bond, to come and see him. When he came in the dying man had the bond in his hand. He handed it to his friend, saying: — "Take this bond and tear it up. I release you from your promise. Jesus has made up to me a hundred fold for all I ever did or suffered on his account. *There is nothing left for you to pay.* Tell everybody how true it is that there is great profit in serving Jesus."

Some years ago there lived a barber, in the city of Bath, in England. For a long time he had been in the habit of keeping his shop open on Sunday. After a while he became a Christian. Then he felt that he must stop breaking the Sabbath, and close his shop on Sunday. Yet he was afraid to do it. He thought, if he did so he should offend his customers and lose all his business. He went to consult his minister. He advised him to close his shop on the Sabbath, and trust God to take care of him. He did so. But it turned out just as the barber expected. His genteel customers were offended. Because he wouldn't shave them on Sunday, they refused to come to him through the week. He lost his business. He was obliged to give up his fashionable shop, and open a poor cellar, where he hardly did business enough to get himself bread to eat. Well, what then? Did God's promise fail in the case of the poor barber? Did he suffer loss instead of securing profit, by shutting up his shop on the Sabbath, for the sake of Jesus? Wait a little and see.

One Saturday evening, about dark, a strange gentleman, who had just arrived in the mail-coach, asked for a barber. One of the hostlers pointed him to the cellar opposite. He came in hastily, and asked to be shaved quickly, while they were changing horses, as it would be too late at night when he reached the end of his journey, and he did not like to break the Sabbath. This touched the barber's feelings, so that he could not help weeping. He asked the stranger to lend him a penny to buy a candle, as it was not light enough to shave him. The gentleman gave it, pitying the great poverty of the poor barber. When he was shaved he said to him, "It seems to me, my friend, that there is something strange in your history, which I have not time now to hear. Here is half a crown for you. When I come back this way I would like to see you again. What is your name?"

"William Reed."

The gentleman started, and exclaimed, "William Reed? Are you from the west of England?"

"Yes, sir: from Kingston, near Taunton."

"What was your father's name?"

"Thomas?"

"Had he any brother?"

"Yes, sir; one, after whom I was named; but he went to the East Indies, and as we never heard from him, we suppose him to be dead."

"Come along with me," said the gentleman. "I am going to see a person who claims to be William Reed, of Kingston, near Taunton. If you can prove that he is an impostor, and that you are the person I am seeking, I have glorious news for you. Your uncle is dead, and has left an immense fortune, which I will hand over to you, as soon as I am sure that you are the William Reed I am seeking."

The barber went with the gentleman. He had no difficulty in proving that he was the real William Reed, and his uncle's large fortune was soon put into his possession. How strange this was! God brought it about in such a way as to reward him for his faithfulness. When he resolved to shut up his shop

on Sunday, he was doing something for Jesus. It seemed, at first, as if he was going to suffer a great loss for what he had done. But, in the end, you see, he was rewarded more than a hundred or a thousand fold. For if he had not shut up his shop on Sundays, he would not have lost his customers. And if he had not lost his customers, he would not have been in that cellar, — so poor as to have to beg a penny to buy a candle; and if it had not been for this, the gentleman who had charge of his uncle's fortune would not have found him out. And so, we may say, that all that property came to him as a reward for what he did for Jesus when he closed his shop on Sunday. Certainly that barber had reason to say that there is profit in doing for Jesus.

But Jesus can reward people a hundred fold for what they do or what they lose on his account, without giving them money. He can make them feel so happy in loving him that they wont mind the loss of their property at all. St. Paul lost all he had in the world for the sake of Jesus. But he said that loss

was a gain, for in loving Jesus he felt happier without the things he had lost, than all the things in the world could make him without Jesus.

A Christian man was on his death-bed a short time since. A friend was sitting by his bedside. He said to that friend, —

"I have lost all my property; I have lost all my relations; my last son is dead. I have lost my hearing; I have lost my eyesight; I am old and poor, and all alone; but yet I am happy for Jesus is with me. Jesus never forsakes me; Jesus never grows old; Jesus is never poor; Jesus never dies; Jesus can make me perfectly happy in himself without anything else."

Oh, it is worth while to know, and love, and serve such a Saviour. There is profit in doing for him.

There is profit here on earth in doing for Jesus. But the greatest profit is in heaven. *How* great that is I can't tell. Nobody can tell.

One Sabbath evening a missionary, on one

of the South Sea Islands, went to the dying bed of one of his converts. The dying man said to him, "I understand you have been preaching about heaven to-day. To-morrow I expect to be in heaven. When I get there I shall go right to the Saviour and thank him for putting it into your heart to leave your home, in a Christian land, and come here, to tell us, poor ignorant heathen, about him and his wonderful love in dying for us. Then I will go and sit down by the pearly gate and wait till you come. And, when you come, I will take you by the hand and lead you to Jesus, and tell him, '*This is the man* that taught me the way to this happy world.'" Ah! what profit that good missionary will then find in what he did for Jesus!

We have had four reasons why we should be doing for Jesus. *The first is because he has done so much for us. The second, because of the honor of doing for him. The third, because of the pleasure; and the fourth, because of the profit of doing for him.*

In making our offering or rendering our

service to Jesus, it is very sweet to think that he is pleased with what we are doing, and is saying to us, "Ye have done it unto me." Blessed Jesus, accept all our services and our offerings! And give us grace that "whatever we do we may do it unto thee!" If we do this, my dear children, we shall live useful, happy lives, and at last we shall receive an abundant reward from Jesus in heaven.

## III.

# The Best Ornament.

The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is, in the sight of God, of great price.—1 Peter 3: 4.

# III.

*The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is, in the sight of God, of great price.*—1 *Peter* 3 : 4.

This verse has something to say about a particular kind of ornament. Ornaments are things which people put on to make themselves look well. If you could count up all the ornaments used in the world, how many they would be! And if we could have them all spread out before us, so that we could examine them, how wonderfully different we should find them! Among ourselves, the ladies wear as ornaments, silks and satins, feathers and flowers, and pearls and jewels. The gentlemen wear cravats and collars, guard-chains and rings, and canes and mustaches, and many such like things. The prophet Isaiah mentions a long list of curious ornaments which the Jewish ladies used to wear in his day. Among these he speaks of "tinkling ornaments about the feet; and cauls and round

tires like the moon; and chains and bracelets; and mufflers and head-bands; and tablets and ear-rings and nose-rings; and wimples and crisping-pins; and hoods and vails." How very strangely some of these things sound to us! We can't tell even what they mean.

Our American Indians, we know, used to hang on their belts the scalps of their enemies, whom they had slain in battle, and thought that these were beautiful ornaments. The African chiefs make necklaces of the teeth and skulls of their enemies, and hang these round their necks as the prettiest ornaments they can wear. The Hottentots smear their naked bodies with a mixture of grease and red paint, and then imagine that they look particularly fine. The New-Zealanders tattoo their faces; while the Chinese think that for ladies to have little, tiny feet, like a baby's, which they can't walk with, is the very nicest kind of an ornament.

In England, many years ago, it used to be considered a great ornament to wear shoes with long, pointed toes that would curl up

like a dog's tail. At one time, too, it was the fashion for gentlemen to wear pantaloons stuffed with cotton, till they swelled out very much beyond their natural size. When the ladies saw the gentlemen looking so large, they thought they must try and keep up with them, so they began to wear the hooped skirts, and thus they got ahead of the gentlemen. This custom, which has come up again in our times, is only an old fashion revived.

If we could make a collection of all the ornaments ever used, by different nations, in different ages of the world, what a curious and interesting museum it would form! But among all the ornaments ever invented for the body, there would be nothing found to compare, for a moment, with the ornament for the soul, of which the apostle speaks in our text. This is the Bible ornament. It is the ornament which God desires to have us wear. It is worth all the other ornaments in the world put together. It is "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit." This is THE BEST ORNAMENT. I want to give you *five* reasons

why it is so. But before beginning these reasons, let us see if we understand what meekness, or a meek spirit, is. A minister once asked the children of his Sunday school this question: "Children, who are the meek?" A little boy present gave him this answer: "They are those who give soft answers to rough questions."

There was an excellent minister in England, a good while ago. A wicked man, who went to his church, was very much offended by something the minister once said in his sermon. Shortly after, he met the minister in the street, when he struck him a heavy blow in the face, and knocked out two of his teeth. Without getting angry, the good man held the teeth out in his hand, and quietly said, "See here, my friend, you have knocked out two of my teeth without any just cause; but if it would do your soul any good I would gladly let you knock out all the rest of them." This minister had on the "ornament of a meek and quiet spirit," and how beautiful it looks upon him!

Meekness, or a meek spirit, means patience under injuries, or not being easily provoked.

This is *the best ornament.* Now let us see some of the reasons why it is so.

"A meek and quiet spirit" is the best ornament, *in the first place, because* JESUS WORE IT.

When Jesus was on earth, he invited sinners to come to him and learn of him; and the reason why he urged them to do this was, said he, "because *I am meek* and lowly in heart." When the prophet Isaiah was speaking of Jesus, hundreds of years before his birth, he said, "He shall not strive nor cry, neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets: a bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench." This means that he should be what we call him in that sweet and simple hymn that we learn in our early years,

"Gentle Jesus, meek and mild."

In another place the same prophet says of

him, "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." Look at the treatment which Jesus received from those whom he came to save. They called him hard names; they told falsehoods about him; they said he was a glutton, and a drunkard, and even that he had a devil; they drove him out of their cities; they took him up, as if he had been a thief and a robber; they bound him; they mocked him; they put a purple robe and a crown of thorns upon him; they spat upon him; they smote him with the palms of their hands; they stripped him of his clothing; they tore his blessed body with cruel scourges; they condemned him to death; they nailed him to the cross, and mocked him and made sport of him as he was hanging there, in dreadful agony, bleeding and dying. And how did *he* act towards them? He never spoke one unkind or angry word. "When he was reviled, he reviled not again." He was gentle and kind to all. He prayed for his murderers. As he hung upon the

cross, with the blood streaming from his torn and mangled limbs, and his body all tortured with those dreadful wounds, he cried, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do!" Oh, how meek and quiet the spirit of Jesus was! He always wore this best ornament. And how beautiful it looks, as we thus see him wearing it! None ever had so much of this lovely spirit as appeared in Jesus. And he did all this to set us an example. He wore this ornament to show us how beautiful it is, and to lead us to put it on and wear it.

In earthly courts it is customary for the king, or the king's son, to set the fashion for the nobility and gentry of the kingdom. In England, whatever style of dress or kind of ornament is worn by the Prince of Wales, who is the eldest son of the queen, is taken up at once, and worn by all the gentlemen about the court. But Jesus is the leader, in this respect, whom we should desire to follow. He wore the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, and this is a good reason why we should wear it.

This is *the best ornament*, because Jesus wore it. This is the *first* reason.

*But "a meek and quiet spirit" is the best ornament, in the second place, because it is so* USEFUL.

This ornament is useful in two ways. One way in which it is useful is *by making those who wear it contented and happy themselves*. It is not the amount of money or property that people have which will make them happy, but the state of their own hearts and feelings. There is Haman, of whom we read in the Bible. He was the next man to Ahasuerus, the greatest king then living in the whole world. Haman had all the riches and honors and pleasures that he could ask or desire. He had splendid ornaments to put on and wear; but, because he had not "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit," he was unhappy. When he rode out in his magnificent chariot, the people used to do him honor, by bowing down to him. But there was one poor Jew, named Mordecai, who refused to do this, and, because he wouldn't do it, Haman was

ried, and fretted, and made himself perfectly miserable.

Now let me show you how happy persons may be, who are very differently situated from Haman, if they only have "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit."

There was a good minister in England, some years ago, named the Rev. H. Venn. One day he told his children that he was going to take them to the most interesting sight in the world. He would not tell them what it was, but in the evening he led them to a miserable hovel. The windows were broken, the walls were crumbling down, and everything about it told of poverty and want. When he reached the door, he said, "My dear children, you will hardly think it possible that any one, living in such a wretched place as this, can be happy. But let me tell you that there is a young man lying here, on a miserable straw-bed, dying of disease. He is but nineteen years of age, yet he has a dreadful fever, and is afflicted with nine painful sores or ulcers."

"Poor man! how wretched he must be!" exclaimed the children.

"I want you to see for yourselves how it is about that," said their father.

He then led them into the hovel, and, speaking to the sick man, whom he had often visited, he said, "My friend, I have brought these children here to show them that it is possible to be in a state of disease and poverty and want, and yet to be happy. Now please to tell them what you think about it."

"Oh, yes, sir!" said the dying youth, with a sweet smile. "I would not exchange my state with that of the richest and healthiest person on earth, who does not know and love my Saviour. Blessed be God! I have a good hope, through Jesus, of entering into those heavenly mansions where Lazarus now dwells, having long since forgotten all his sorrows and miseries. This sickness and poverty are nothing to bear while Jesus is with me. Indeed, sir, I am truly happy, and I hope to be happy forever. I thank God every hour for making me a Christian."

Here was a man with "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit;" and you see how useful that ornament was to him in making him contented and happy.

*But there is another way in which this ornament is useful, and that is by helping us to make others good and happy too.*

Some ornaments which people wear, not only do no good, but they do a great deal of harm. They make some people, who see them worn, feel discontented and unhappy, because they can't wear them. Sometimes these ornaments will tempt persons to steal money, or do wrong things, in order that they may get them too. But "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit" never had this effect on any one. If we wear this ornament, we may be sure it will never do anybody any harm, while it often does people a great deal of good. Now let me show you how much good one boy did to another by wearing this ornament.

Once upon a time, as the old stories used to begin, several gentlemen were talking round the table in the house of a friend

By and by one of them said to the others, "Depend upon it, a gentle spirit is a mighty cure-all." There was a little boy sitting in the corner of the room, learning his Latin grammar. He heard these words of the gentleman, and repeated them to himself, — "A gentle spirit is a mighty cure-all." The gentleman turned round to see who was repeating his words, and said, "Yes, that's it; don't you think so, my little man?"

The boy blushed a little, at finding himself spoken to, and said, "I don't think I understand what you mean, sir."

"Well, then, I'll explain it to you," said the gentleman; "for it's a principle you ought to understand and act upon. It's a principle that is going to conquer the world; and I don't know that I could explain it to you better than by telling you about the way in which it conquered me."

"My father was an officer in the army, and he thought the best way to settle everything was by fighting. If a boy ever gave me a saucy word he would say to me, 'Fight him, Charley, fight him.'

"By and by I was sent to a famous school, and it so happened that my seat in school was next to a boy named Tom Tucker. When I found that he was a poor boy, and lived in a very humble dwelling, I began to put on airs before him, and strut about, and talk of what my father had, and how he lived. But Tom was a capital scholar, very much liked by the other boys, and an excellent hand at playing bat and ball, and so, for a while, we were on very good terms. After a time, some of the fellows of my stamp, and I with the rest, got into a difficulty with one of the teachers, and, somehow or other, we got the notion that Tom Tucker was at the bottom of it.

"This made me very mad. 'Tom Tucker — who is he?' I cried in anger. 'I'll let him know who *I* am;' and so we rattled on till we all got into a rage. Then the boys set me on to go down to Tom Tucker's and give him a thrashing. Swelling with anger, I bolted into Tom's yard. There he was playing with his little sister, and their dog Trip. Marching straight up to him, I bawled out, 'I'll teach

you how to talk about me, in this way, Mr. Tom Telltale.'

"Tom never winced, or seemed the least frightened, but stood looking at me, as mild and gentle as a lamb.

"'Tell me,' I cried, throwing down my books, doubling my fist, and sidling up to him, 'tell me, or I'll'—kill you, I was going to say, for murder was in my heart. Tom stepped aside, and said in a firm, yet mild tone, 'Charles, you may strike me as much as you please: I tell you *I shan't strike back again.* Fighting is a poor way to settle difficulties. When you are yourself I'll talk with you.'

"Oh! what an answer that was! How it cowed me down! So firm, and yet so mild! I felt there was no fun in having the fight all on one side. I was ashamed of myself, and my foolish, wicked temper. I longed to get out of his sight. I saw what a poor, foolish way *my way* of doing things was. I felt that Tom had got the better of me completely; and from that hour Tom Tucker had an in

fluence over me which nobody else had before or since. And all that was done by the power of a gentle spirit. And so I end as I began, my little man," said the gentleman; "a gentle spirit is a mighty cure-all."

Now Tom Tucker was wearing "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit," and here we see what good it did to his noisy, quarrelsome school-mate. It changed his whole character for life. This is the best ornament then, in the second place *because it is so useful.*

*The third reason why "a meek and quiet spirit" is the best ornament is, that it* MAKES THOSE WHO WEAR IT BEAUTIFUL.

Other ornaments are for the body, but this is an ornament for the soul. And it makes the soul that wears it look really beautiful. You know how dreary a garden looks in winter. The leaves have all fallen. The flowers are all withered; the bushes are all bare, and everything looks dark and desolate. But how different it is with that garden in the spring! The leaves are out again, all fresh and green; the flowers appear blooming in their loveli

ness, and everything looks bright and beautiful. The soul, without this ornament, is like a garden in winter. The soul, with this ornament, is like the garden in spring. It makes the soul look beautiful.

Let us take another illustration. Yonder is a great mass of dark storm-clouds in the sky, without any sun to shine upon them. How gloomy they look! How black and disagreeable! You turn away your eye, without a moment's desire to see them again. But let the setting sun now shine out from behind them, and how different they look! How they glow! How they sparkle! How beautiful those bright, golden, purple colors are which are shining all over them! You love to stand and gaze upon them, and feel as if you would never get tired. Now, just what those dark clouds are without the sunshine, the soul is that does not wear "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit." And just what those clouds are when the sun is shining upon them, and lighting them up with his glories, the soul is when it wears this best ornament.

Yes, no matter how old, or wrinkled, or ugly a person's face may be, if he is only wearing this ornament, it will shine through his face, as the sun does through the cloud, and make it look quite beautiful.

One day, in winter, several years ago, a little boy from the south, who was on a visit to the city of Boston, was taking his first lesson in "sliding down hill." He was enjoying the fun very much, when, all at once, he found his foot had caught in the folds of a lady's rich silk dress. He was greatly confused and mortified; and springing from his sled, with his cap in his hand, he began to make an earnest apology.

"I beg your pardon, ma'am," he cried; "I'm very sorry."

"Never mind," said the lady, "there is no great harm done, and you feel worse about it than I do."

"But, dear madam," said the boy, "your dress is ruined. I thought you would be very angry with me, for being so careless."

"Oh, no," said the lady, "better have a torn dress than a ruffled temper."

"Oh, isn't she a beauty?" asked the little fellow, as the gentle-spirited lady went on her way.

"Who? That lady?" asked his companion. "If you call her a beauty, you shan't choose for me. Why she is more than forty years old, and her face is all yellow and wrinkled."

"I don't care if her face is wrinkled," said the little fellow; "*her soul is beautiful, anyhow.*"

And that was true. The lady was wearing "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit," and this made her soul beautiful. This is the best ornament, *because it makes those who wear it beautiful.*

*The fourth reason why this is the best ornament is, that* IT MAY BE WORN AT ALL TIMES.

Other ornaments are only put on, and worn on particular occasions. Muffs and furs are worn only in winter. Light, thin dresses are only fit to be worn in summer. Bridal orna-

ments are only worn at weddings. Queen Victoria has a variety of most beautiful jewels, as the ornaments of her crown; but these are only worn on certain grand occasions. The general of an army only wears his full dress on parade days, or other important occasions. Ornaments of this kind are not fit to be worn every day. People do not wear them when they are travelling, or when they are sick, or when they are going to die. But it is different with this "ornament of a meek and quiet spirit." This can be worn by day or by night, in summer or in winter, at home or abroad, when sick or when well, when living or when dying. Yes, even when we come to die, in that solemn hour when all other ornaments are laid aside, "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit" may still be worn. We can wear it on our dying bed. We can wear it at the judgment-bar. And when we enter heaven we can wear it there, among the angels forever. This is a good reason why it is the best ornament: it can be *worn at all times.*

There is only *one other reason to mention* [illegible] *best ornament, and that is,* THE LONGER IT IS WORN THE MORE BEAUTIFUL IT BECOMES.

Other ornaments soon fade. You have seen a May-queen, adorned with roses and other lovely flowers. They look very beautiful at first, but how soon they begin to droop and wither! So it is with the ornaments we put upon our clothes: in the spring we get them new and fresh, but before the summer is over they become soiled and faded, and lose their beauty. It is just the same with the ornaments which God puts upon our faces when we are young. The bright eyes and blooming cheeks which many young persons have are very beautiful: but, ah! how soon they fade away! I remember, when I was a little fellow, about ten years old, I used to have bushy brown hair, and cheeks like roses. Sometimes persons would stop me in the street, and say "Why, my little man, what have you been doing to your cheeks?" But I hadn't done anything. Those rosy cheeks

were the ornaments which God had put there But the bushy brown hair, and the rosy cheeks have all gone, long since.

Men sometimes carve monuments out of wood or stone, or iron or brass, and put them upon their houses or other buildings; yet even *these* will crumble to pieces and wear away.

But how different it is with "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit," of which we are speaking! This never fades, and never wears out. Yes, and not only so, but it keeps on growing more and more beautiful all the time. If we should live to be as old as Methuselah, it would not stop growing in beauty while we lived. No, nor will it stop growing in beauty at death, even. Moses was the meekest man upon earth when he lived. He wore this ornament in this world for eighty years. It was growing in beauty all that time. He has been dead between three and four thousand years. This ornament has been growing more beautiful upon him ever since he died. Oh, how lovely he must appear now, in heaven, as he

wears this best ornament still! Suppose you had a pearl, or a diamond, that was growing larger in size, and more brilliant in appearance, every year, how very valuable it would be! There is no such pearl, or diamond in the world. But "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit" is like a spiritual pearl or diamond; and it has this wonderful property, that it is growing in beauty and value all the time. Then we may well say it is *the best ornament.*

It is so *because Jesus wore it;* it is so *because it is so useful;* it is so *because it makes those who wear it beautiful;* it is so *because it may be worn at all times;* and it is so *because the longer it is worn the more beautiful it becomes.*

Now, my dear young friends, I hope you will all try to get this ornament and wear it. You can't get it yourself; I can't give it to you, your parents or teachers can't give it to you; but Jesus can. He says, "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly." If you have bad tempers, pray to him to help you overcome them. He will give you "the ornament of a meek

and quiet spirit," which is, *in the sight of God, of great price.*' This is a good reason why you should seek it. God loves it. God loves other ornaments, or else he wouldn't have made so many. See how he has ornamented the sky with that deep blue color, with those lovely clouds and rainbows and all the beauties of sunrise and sunset. See how he has ornamented the earth with trees and shrubs and flowers and grass. See how he has ornamented the birds with feathers of the most beautiful colors, and even the little butterflies with a dress more splendid than the richest lady in the land ever put on. But God does not think much of any of these, or else he would not let them fade so soon. It is not said of any of those ornaments that they are "of great price in his sight." This is only said of this best ornament of which we are speaking. If it only said that this was "of great price in *man's sight*," that wouldn't be much. Men often make mistakes and think things of great value that are worth very little. I know a gentleman who was a

sailor when a young man. He once went on a voyage to the South Shetland Islands, far down toward the South Pole. The object of the voyage was to get seal-skins. The vessel remained there a good while. One day, in wandering about on shore, my friend discovered a cave. He entered the cave and found a great mass of what he took to be diamonds. He hastened back to the ship, got a large bushel-bag, filled it with the supposed diamonds, and put them away safely in his great sea-chest. He said nothing about his discovery, but kept the secret to himself. All the voyage home, however, he comforted himself with the thought that when he returned he was to be the richest man in town. But when his treasure came to be examined, instead of being diamonds they proved to be only quartz crystals, and the whole bag-full was not worth five cents.

Men often think things of great price that are really worth nothing. But God never makes such a mistake. When he says a thing is valuable, we may be sure it is so. But this

best ornament is of great price in his sight. Then let us all seek it, and wear it. It will make us useful in this world, and happy and glorious in the world to come.

# IV.

## The Prince of Peace.

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This is one of the names of Jesus. The prophet Isaiah was speaking of him, about seven hundred years before he was born. He told a great many interesting things about him. Among these, he said that "His name shall be called Wonderful." And then he went on to mention what several of these names should be. One of his names was to be "Counsellor." Another was "The Mighty God." Another was "The Everlasting Father," and another, "*The Prince of Peace*." What a sweet name this is! And how properly it is given to Jesus! When the angels sung their song over the new-born Saviour, as he was lying in the manger, they said, "Glory to God in the highest! on earth, *peace*, good-will toward men." Jesus came into our world for the purpose of making

peace. He came to make peace between God and men. The Bible tells us that God has a controversy or quarrel with men. *We* began the quarrel by sinning against God; and we keep it up by our sins.

Now, if two boys or girls quarrel with each other, you know how they act. They don't like to come near each other, and they wont speak if they do. And this is just the way in which we feel and act toward God. There is a quarrel between him and us. But Jesus came to make up this quarrel, and lead us to be at peace with God. This is one reason why he is called the "Prince of Peace."

But Jesus came to make peace *between nations*, as well as between God and men. The Bible tells us that "He maketh wars to cease, unto the ends of the earth." This is what he has done in our own land. Last year, at this time, there was war in our country, — a dreadful civil war; that is, a war with our own countrymen. There were more than a million of soldiers in the field, trying to shoot and kill each other. But this is all over now.

The Prince of Peace has brought that war to a close. And the Bible tells us that the day is coming when Jesus will make all nations to love each other, and be at peace. They "shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; and they shall learn war no more." Then no more guns will be made; and no more powder or shot. No more strong forts will be put up, and no more iron-clads will be built; but peace and good will prevail among all nations; and Jesus may well be called "The Prince of Peace," because he will make peace among nations.

But then Jesus will make peace between all people, as well as nations. He will teach men and women and children, in the same families and schools and neighborhoods, to love each other and to be at peace. And if he does this, surely this is reason enough why he should be called "The Prince of Peace."

Now our sermon to-day will be about *what Jesus does to make peace.*

I wish to show you that there are *three*

things Jesus gives to his people, which help to make peace between them. Each of these things begin with a *t*; so that if you remember the three *t*'s, you will have the points of this sermon.

*The first thing that Jesus, as Prince of Peace, gives to his people, is* A PEACEFUL TONGUE.

What a little thing the tongue is! And yet how much mischief it can do! You know how a single spark will sometimes kindle a fire that will go on blazing and roaring and spreading, till scores or hundreds of houses are burnt down. The Bible says, "Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! and *the tongue is a fire.*" A few angry words, spoken in a thoughtless moment, oh, how much evil they have often done! They have broken up families, and separated friends, and set neighbors to quarrelling, and even plunged nations into long and bloody wars. The Bible says "the tongue is a *world of iniquity.*" It says, "Life and death are in the power of the tongue." Many persons have been killed by unkind words spoken to them. And the tongue is very hard to manage.

A man named Pambo once came to a minister, and asked him to teach him a lesson from the Bible. The minister gave him this verse, from the Psalms, to read and commit to memory; —"I said I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue." When he had fixed this in his mind, he shut up the book, and gave it back to the minister, saying he wouldn't go on any farther till he had learned to practise this. Then he went away. Some months after, the minister met him, and asked him why he didn't come for another lesson. He said, "he hadn't learned to govern his tongue yet." And *forty years* after that, he said the same thing to some one who spoke to him about it. The trouble with this man was that he tried, in his own strength, to govern his tongue. If he had gone to Jesus, "the Prince of Peace," and asked him to help him, he might soon have learned that first lesson the minister gave him.

The Bible says that men can tame all sorts of wild animals and serpents, but that no man can tame the tongue. And it is true that no

man can do this of himself. But if we get Jesus to help us we can do it. He is the Prince of Peace. And he can give his people peaceful tongues, and teach them to speak kind, pleasant words; and these words always help to make peace. Solomon says, "A soft answer turneth away wrath." And Jesus teaches his people to give soft answers.

There was a good minister in England some years ago. His name was John Brown. He lived in a town called Haddington. He was a true follower of the Prince of Peace. Jesus had given him a peaceful tongue. He knew well how to give a soft answer. When he was first settled, in the church at Haddington, the people received him with great kindness, and were very much pleased with him. This was the case with all the congregation, except one man, whose name was Smith. He wasn't pleased with the new minister, and had made up his mind that he wouldn't like him.

One day Dr. Brown met him in the street, and said to him, "Well, Mr. Smith, they tell me that you are opposed to my being settled in the church at Haddington?"

"That is true, sir," said Mr. Smith.

"Well now, and if it be a fair question, may I ask on what ground you object to me?"

"Because, sir, I don't think you are fit to have so large and important a church."

"That is just what I think," said the Dr.; "but what, sir, is the use of you and I setting up our opinion in opposition to *all the people in the parish?*"

Mr. Smith smiled, and gave up his opposition to Dr. Brown, and became, from that day, one of his warmest friends. In this way "a soft answer turned away his wrath," — he was conquered by a peaceful tongue.

Not long ago I read a story about two farmers who were angry with each other. They were not followers of the Prince of Peace. They had not, either of them, received from Jesus a peaceful tongue. One of them found the other's pig in the road; he caught hold of it, and, for mere spite, he cut two slits in the skin, on the side of the pig's neck, and pushed one of the pig's forefeet through these slits, so

that he couldn't get it out again. The poor pig had to go hobbling along, on three feet, and squealing terribly as he went. As soon as the owner of the pig saw this, he sought out the cow of his neighbor. He took out his knife, and cut the cow's mouth, on each side, so as to make it wider than it was naturally. When the owner of the cow saw what was done, he went to his neighbor in great anger, and stormed away at him, for his cruelty in cutting his cow's mouth.

"Oh, I didn't do it," said he, telling a great story. "The fact is, that when your cow saw my pig, she laughed so much that it split her mouth open."

Now, if those men went on in that way, how long do you suppose it would take them to make peace between themselves, and to learn to love each other? They would never do it, while the world stands. They were fighting one another with hatred, and neither would get the victory. Love, gentleness, a peaceful tongue, is the thing to fight with, if we want to conquer people, and make peace.

Let me show you how successful it was in a case very much like this. Mr. B. and Mr. R. lived near together. Mr. R. kept a great many hens. One day, some of them got into Mr. B's garden and scratched up his flower-beds. Instead of driving them out, and asking Mr. R to please try and keep his chickens in, he got his gun and shot some of them. Then he went over to Mr. R.'s house in great anger, to scold him, and quarrel with him.

"Mr. R.," said he, "I found some of your hens in my garden, and I shot them. If I catch any more, there I'll wring their heads off. So you know what to expect."

But Mr. R. had a peaceful tongue. "I'm sorry, Mr. B.," said he, "that my hens have given you any trouble. I'll try my best to keep them in. But dinner is just ready. Wont you come in and sit down with us?"

"No, thank you, sir. But pray forgive me for speaking so roughly." Then they shook hands, and were good friends. Mr. B. never shot any more of Mr. R.'s hens.

Let me tell you now about a gentleman

who used to live in Philadelphia. He belonged to the Society of Friends. He was a very kind man. Jesus had given him a peaceful tongue, and, as you will see, he made a good use of it. He had a pear-tree in his garden, which bore excellent fruit. Between his yard and his next door neighbor's was a high fence, with sharp spikes along the top. One year, when the pears were ripe, a girl, belonging to the family next door, got very fond of our friend's pears. He saw her, several times, climb up the fence, and walk carefully along, between the spikes, till she came opposite the tree. Then she would fill a little basket with the fruit, and carry it away.

One day, the gentleman filled a basket with the nicest pears he could find, went into his neighbor's house, and asked to see the girl, whose name was Rebecca.

"Rebecca," said he, "here are some nice pears for thee."

She was so much surprised that she couldn't speak.

So the gentleman went on to say, "Re-

becca, I have brought these pears on purpose for thee. I wish to make thee a present of them, as I perceive thou art very fond of them."

Rebecca felt very much confused. She grew red in the face, and said, —

"I don't want 'em, sir."

"Ah, but thou dost, Rebecca, or thou would'st not take such pains to get them."

Still she wouldn't take them, but kept saying, — "I don't want them. I don't want them."

"Rebecca," said the kind friend, "thou must go and get a basket for these pears, or I shall leave them on the carpet. I am sure thou must like them, or thou would'st not climb such a high and dangerous fence to get them. Those spikes are very sharp, Rebecca; and if thy feet should slip, as thou art walking on the fence — and I am much afraid they will — thou would'st get hurt a great deal more than the pears are worth. Thou art welcome to the fruit; but I hope I shall not see thee expose thyself so foolishly again."

Now, do you think that Rebecca would ever steal any more of that gentleman's pears? No. You may be sure of that. He had conquered her by his peaceful tongue.

What, then, is the first thing that Jesus, as the Prince of Peace, gives to his people?

A peaceful tongue. That is the first thing.

*The second thing that Jesus, as the Prince of Peace, gives to his people, is* A PEACEFUL TEMPER. This is the second *t*.

Jesus says to all his people, "Learn of me, for I am meek." Before he went out of the world, he said to his disciples, "Peace I leave with you. My peace I give unto you." Jesus had a gentle, loving, peaceful temper; and unless we have a temper like him we can't be his followers. And there is nothing that has such power to make peace among men as a temper like that which Jesus had.

There was a little boy, in a public school, who had often been laughed at on account of his shabby clothes, by another boy, older and richer than himself. This grieved the little fellow very much. He was afraid to venture

on the play-ground at recess, because this boy made so much fun of him; so he would go away by himself, and spend his play-time in reading, or studying his lessons.

One day, while he was thus engaged, he heard the large boy, who had treated him so badly, say to some of the boys about him, — "There, now, only to think; I've learned the wrong history lesson, and so I shall be sure to lose my place, for I've left my book at home, and there wont be time to go and get it, and then learn the lesson before the class is called up. Dear me, dear me, what shall I do?"

Most of the boys only laughed at him. They envied him, for being at the head of the class so long, and were glad to think there was a chance for some of them to get above him.

But it was different with little Edward, the boy whom he had treated so badly. He was a young follower of the Prince of Peace. He had a peaceful temper. He said, "Henry, here is my book; you are welcome to use it as long as you wish; and I will help you about your lesson, if I can."

What a noble little fellow he was! Well, you may be sure, Henry never said another unkind word to him, or teased him any more about his poor clothes. Edward's peaceful temper had conquered him, and made him his warm friend for life.

Let me give you another story, to show how much good may be done by those who try to have peaceful tempers.

One afternoon a big boy stood at the door of a Sunday school. He was so bad that he had been turned out the Sunday before. His mother brought him back, and begged that he might be taken in again. The superintendent said, "We should be glad to do him good, but we are afraid he'll injure all the other scholars. It is very bad for a school when a *big* boy sets a bad example."

"We know he's a bad boy at school," said his mother; "but then he's ten times worse at home; and he'll be lost if you don't take him back."

"We would gladly take him back, if we could be sure he would do better. I'll see."

The superintendent stepped back into the school, and rang his bell for silence. The lessons were stopped, and all listened to hear what he had to say.

"Boys," said he, "Bob Jones, the big boy whom we turned out last Sunday, for bad behavior, wants to come back; but we can't take him in unless we can be sure he will do better. Will any one be surety for him?"

Then there was a pause. The older boys shook their heads. They said they knew him too well. The others didn't care for him. At last, one little fellow pitied the big bad boy. He felt sorry that no one would be surety for Bob, to take him into school again. The little boy was known as "Ragged Tom." But it wasn't his fault that he was ragged, for his mother was very poor. Presently he rose up in his place, and the superintendent heard his little voice saying, —

"If you please, sir, I will, sir."

"*You*, Tom! a little boy like you! Do you know what it means to be surety, Tom?"

"Yes, sir, if you please; it means when he

is a bad boy again, I'm to be punished for him."

"And are you willing to be punished for that big boy?"

"Yes, sir, if he's bad again."

"Then, come in," said the superintendent, looking toward the door. Bob came in, with a downcast look, and walked across the floor to a seat in his class. But while doing this, he was thinking thus to himself: "I know I'm a bad boy, but I'm not so mean as that, anyhow. I'll never let that little fellow be punished for me, *no, never!*" God had put this thought into Bob's mind. He was helping "Ragged Tom" in his work as surety. We shall see directly what came of it.

As the children were leaving school, the superintendent saw big Bob and little Tom walking and talking together. He said to himself, "I'm afraid that boy will do Tom some harm. I must go and look after them." So he followed them, at some distance down the lane.

When he reached the cottage where Tom

lived, he said to his mother, "where is your son Tom?"

"Oh! he's just gone upstairs, with a big boy that came in with him. I don't know what they are doing."

"May I go up?" he asked.

"Oh, yes, sir."

The superintendent went softly up the stairs, and, as he reached the top, he could see, through the door left ajar, that Tom and the big boy were kneeling down together. He listened a moment, and heard Tom's voice saying, "O Lord, make Bob, who has been the worst boy in the school, O Lord, make him the best boy."

Then he went in and knelt down by Tom's side, and they all prayed together.

God heard their prayers and made Bob — the big bad boy — become one of the best boys in the school. And he raised up friends for "Ragged Tom," who put him to school, and then sent him to college. He became a minister, and went out as a missionary to the heathen.

Tom proved that he was a follower of the

Prince of Peace by having a peaceful temper. By exercising that temper he tried to do good, and make peace among those about him.

The second thing that Jesus, as the Prince of Peace, gives to his people is *a peaceful temper*. This is the second *t*.

*The third thing that Jesus, as the Prince of Peace, gives to his people is*, A PEACEFUL TASTE.

This is the third *t*. A peaceful taste. Now perhaps some of you are ready to say, "Well, this is funny enough, to talk about people having a taste." But it isn't funny either. It's just so. Only when we speak of the taste which a man or woman, a boy or girl has, we mean something very different from what we mean when we speak of the taste that things have, like sugar, or salt. When you put a piece of sugar on your tongue, how does it feel? Sweet. Then what do you say the taste of sugar is? Sweet. The taste of vinegar is what? Sour. Yes, because it produces that feeling when you put it on your tongue.

But when we speak of the tastes that peo-

ple have, we mean by it what they love to do. If you see a boy, who is all the time getting into fights and quarrels, and you say he has a taste for quarrelling, what do you mean? That he *loves* to quarrel. If you see a girl who is always slipping away by herself, to read some interesting book, and who had rather do that than play; then you say, she has a *taste* for reading. And you mean by that, that she *loves* reading, don't you? And so when we say that a person has a taste for any particular thing, we mean that *that* is the thing which such a person loves. And when we say that Jesus gives his people a peaceful taste, or a taste for peace, we mean that he gives them a love for it. He teaches them to try to make all about them peaceful, and happy. And he who does this may well be called "The Prince of Peace."

The greatest blessing we can receive is to be made followers of the Prince of Peace. Then, we shall have a taste for peace, or a love for peace. And when we have this, we shall be trying all the time to make those

about us happy and peaceful. Look at the apostle Paul. Before he became a Christian, he went about persecuting people, shutting them up in prison, and putting them to death. Then he had a taste, or love, for those things. But when he learned to know Jesus, his taste was changed. He loved to preach the gospel of peace, — to show people the way to heaven, — to do them good and try to make them happy.

And all the true followers of the Prince of Peace will have the same taste that Paul had, and will try to do good in the same way.

Now, let me show you how differently those people will act who have this peaceful taste, — this love for doing good, — from those who don't have it.

A teacher and his scholar, a rich young man, were one day walking out together in the country. The teacher was a follower of the Prince of Peace, the young man was not. As they walked along, they saw a pair of old shoes, lying in the path, belonging to a poor man, who was at work in a field close by, and who had nearly finished his day's work.

The young man turned to his teacher, and said, "Now let's have some sport! Suppose we hide this old man's shoes, and then conceal ourselves in the bushes, and see what he will do when he can't find his shoes."

"Oh, no," said the teacher; "we should never amuse ourselves by giving pain to others, and especially to the poor. I'll tell you how you can give yourself much greater pleasure, by means of this old man. Put a silver dollar in each of his shoes, for you can well afford it; and then we'll hide ourselves, and see what he says when he finds them."

The young man did so, and then the teacher and he hid themselves behind some bushes close by, where they could easily watch the old man, and see his surprise and joy when he found the money.

Well, pretty soon he had finished his work, and came across the field to the path where he had left his coat and shoes. While he was putting on his coat, he slipped his foot into one of his shoes, when, feeling something hard in it, he stooped down and found the dollar

What wonder and astonishment were seen in his face! He gazed upon the dollar; he turned it round and round, and looked at it, again and again. Then he looked all about him, as if to find out where it came from; but he could see no one. Then he slipped the money into his pocket, and began to put on his other shoe. But how great was his astonishment when he found the other dollar! This was more than he could stand. His feelings quite overcame him. He looked up to heaven, and poured out aloud his thanksgiving to God. And the tears rolled down his cheeks as he spoke of his wife, sick and helpless, and his children without bread, but who would be saved from suffering by this unexpected treasure.

The young man himself could not help shedding tears, as he saw and heard all this; and, as they went on with their walk, he thanked his teacher for the good lesson he had taught him.

Now, let me show how even children can be followers of the Prince of Peace, by doing good as he did.

A pious mother was putting her children to bed one night. While doing this, she asked them, as she was accustomed to do, what they had done to make anybody happy that day. The older children told her of different things they had done. But the two youngest, who were twin sisters, didn't say anything. She repeated her question to them. One of them said, "I can't remember anything good I did to-day, mother, only one of my schoolmates was happy because she had gained the head of the class, and I smiled on her, and kissed her, and told her I was glad for her. She thanked me, and said it was very kind."

"And what has dear Minnie got to say?" asked her mother, turning to her other little one. "A little girl, who sat by me on the bench at school," said Minnie, "had lost her brother. I saw that, while she was studying her lesson, she hid her face in her book and cried. I felt sorry for her, and I laid my face on the same book, and cried with her. Then she looked up, and wiped the tears away, and put her arms round my neck. And,

I don't know why, but she said I had done her good."

Dear little Minnie! how sweetly she was learning to be like Jesus. She was getting the third thing, — a peaceful taste, — a love for doing good.

I am so anxious for you all to try to be followers of the Prince of Peace that I must give you one more story to show how children can be doing good even where they don't give any money.

It was a cold winter's day. The snow was falling fast and the wind was blowing fiercely. Little Bettie Moore was standing at the window, wrapped up in a big shawl, looking out at the people, as they passed by in the street. In the room behind her was a large fire, and her little brother was rolling on the rug before it, amusing himself with his Christmas things Presently Bettie said, —

"O George, would you believe it? here is a man coming along, all alone, with a little coffin under his arm. There now, he has set it down on the stone step at our gate. And,

poor man, he looks so sad! I'll run down to the door and ask him if I can do anything for him;" and, forgetting the cold, little Bettie ran downstairs and hurried out to the gate.

The man looked at her for a moment, and then leaned his head on the lid of the coffin, and burst into a flood of tears.

Bettie laid her little hand gently on his shoulder, and stood there weeping too, but not knowing what to say.

By and by, the man looked up to her again and said, "God bless you, little miss; you must be an angel God has sent to comfort a poor broken-hearted father. May the spirit of her that is in this coffin keep you from harm."

"Is it your little girl?" asked Bettie.

"Yes."

"Well, you can meet her again when you die, if you love Jesus. Mamma says we'll meet our little buried sister in heaven, if we pray to God, and mind what Jesus says. Oh, I'm so sorry for you," she said, almost choked with her sobs; "but you'll try to meet your little girl in heaven, wont you?"

"I will, by God's help," said the man "Wont you pray for me, my little lady?"

"Yes, sir," said Bettie, "I'll pray for you every night before I go to bed. And if you'll come to our church, round the corner, on Sunday, our minister will tell you about Jesus, and pray for you. He always prays for those in sorrow."

"God bless you, little darling. I haven't gone much to church, but I'll come for your sake. Now go into the house; it's too cold for you out here. Good-by."

Then he went away with his little coffin, and he felt as much comforted as if an angel from heaven had really been sent to speak kind words to him. He came to church next Sunday. He heard the minister talk about Jesus, and pray for those in sorrow. After that he went regularly to church. He became a Christian, and died a happy death, and went to meet his little girl in heaven.

And now, my dear children, I wont keep you any longer. Remember the text, "His name shall be called . . . the Prince of

Peace." As the Prince of Peace, Jesus gives his people three peaceful things. What is the first? Peaceful tongues. What is the second? Peaceful tempers. What is the third? Peaceful tastes. These are three precious and profitable *t*'s. How I wish I could give them to every scholar here. *I* can't give them, but Jesus can. Oh, ask him for them! Try to get them. If you do so, I'm sure that the coming New Year will be a very happy one to you. What happy times you will have at home, and at school, and wherever you go, if you only carry these three *t*'s with you! Peaceful tongues, peaceful tempers, and peaceful tastes — get these, and then you will be true followers of the Prince of Peace.

# V.

## The Best Friend.

There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. — Proverbs 18: 24.

# V.

There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. — *Proverbs* 18 : 24.

Suppose that you have been born in England. When you are twelve years old, your father and mother both die. The only other relation you have in the world is an uncle, who lives in this country, in Pittsburg. You conclude to come across the great ocean, and find out your uncle in America. You take passage on board of a vessel bound to Philadelphia. The ship gets safely over the sea. She comes up the river Delaware. You land on the wharf, at the foot of Walnut Street. But there is not a single person in this great city that you know; not one that knows you. You begin to walk about the city. You go up one street and down another. Here you see a little girl walking, hand in hand, with her mother. There you see a little boy riding out with his father. And there, again, you

see a lot of boys and girls playing merrily together. How happy they seem! They all have bright, pleasant homes to which they can go. They all have friends who love them and are kind to them. But you have no home to go to. Among all the crowds around you, in the great city, there is not a single person you ever saw before, — not one kind friend that knows you, or loves you, or cares for you. How lonely and sad this would make you feel! You would want to get away into some corner, or sit down on some step, and have a good long cry.

But how different your situation is from that of this poor, lonely stranger! You all have nice homes to go to. You all have many good, kind friends. They are always glad to see you. They meet you with kind words and pleasant looks and a warm shake of the hand. You feel happy among them. It is a good thing to have earthly friends, like those we are now speaking of; but, "There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." This refers to Jesus. He is the friend of sinners. It is

he who is referred to in the hymn which says : —

> " One there is above all others,
> Well deserves the name of friend :
> *His* is love beyond a brother's,
> Costly, free, and knows no end."

Our sermon to-day will be about *The Best Friend.* Jesus is the best friend.

I wish to give you four reasons why Jesus is the best friend.

*The first reason why Jesus is the best friend, is because he is* THE OLDEST FRIEND.

Suppose you should take a sheet of paper, and write down upon it a list of the names of all your friends. You have a list of twenty, or thirty, or fifty, or a hundred names, or more. Then suppose you begin at the top of the list, and write down, opposite to each name, how long that person has been your friend. Here is the name of a person you first became acquainted with at the sea-shore last summer. He has been your friend about five months. Here is another you have known since last Christmas. He has been your friend almost a year. Here is another, who has been your

friend for three years; another for five years; another for seven, and so on. In this way you could soon find out how old all your friends were. You could tell just when they became your friends. Before that time, you didn't know them, or love them, or care for them, nor they for you. At the bottom of the list you would write down the names of your father and your mother. They are your best earthly friends. They have known you, and loved you, longer and better than any of your other friends. Their friendship began as soon as you were born. It is as old as you are. But before you were born, even they didn't know you, or love you, or care for you. They have only been your friends for a very few years.

But how long has Jesus been your friend? Who can answer this question? Jesus was your friend before you were born. Jesus was your friend before your parents were born. Before the days of George Washington, and the times of the Revolutionary war, Jesus was your friend. Before the time when Christo-

pher Columbus discovered America, Jesus was your friend. Before William the Conqueror invaded England, about nine hundred years ago, Jesus was your friend. Before the time when Jesus himself was born into our world, — eighteen hundred years ago, — he was your friend. Before the time when Noah built his ark, and the world was drowned by the waters of the flood, — that is more than four thousand years ago, — Jesus was your friend. Before the world was made, — that is nearly six thousand years ago, — Jesus was your friend. His friendship for you never had a beginning. He says to each of his people, in the Bible, "I have loved thee with an *everlasting* love" This means a love which has had no beginning. When you look up at the stars, at night, as they are shining in the quiet sky, you can point to them, and say, "Jesus knew me, and thought of me, and loved me, and was my friend before those stars began to twinkle."

And this is the first reason why Jesus is the best friend, because he is *the oldest friend*.

*The second reason is because he is* THE KINDEST FRIEND.

When we feel great kindness in our hearts, toward those about us, there are two ways in which we may show that kindness; one is by our *words*, the other is by our *actions;* or by *what we say* and by *what we do*. You know how easily we can tell what kind of feeling a person has in his heart, toward those about him, by just listening to the words he speaks. Here are two fathers going to their homes. One is a miserable drunkard. He spends all his money at the tavern, and leaves his poor wife to get bread for herself and the children, in any way she can. As soon as he enters the door, he begins to curse and swear. He scolds the children, and storms at them, till they shrink away into the corners of the room, like frightened deer. Now they are only *words* which this poor drunken father has been using, but ah! how much unkindness has been shown by those words!

But here is another father going to his home. He is affectionate and loving. There is a

sweet smile on his face. The words he speaks are gentle, pleasant, kind words. His return to that home is like the rising of the sun after the darkness of the night, or like the coming of spring after the dreariness of winter. How glad the children are that father has come! How they love to hear his voice! for the words he speaks show the kindness of his heart toward them. And, just in the same way, Jesus shows his kindness toward us by the words which he speaks to us. The Bible is full of sweet, comforting words which show the kindness that is in the heart of Jesus toward us. In one place he says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." In another place he says, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." He calls us "his sons," and "his daughters," his "friends," and his "treasure." He says, "Fear not, I am with thee: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the fire, it shall not kindle

upon thee." "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort thee." These are some of the precious words which Jesus has spoken, and they show us what wonderful kindness is in his heart toward us.

*But actions* show kindness as well as words.

In the southern part of Africa, near the Cape of Good Hope, the people are afflicted with a fearful disease, like the leprosy of which we read in the Bible. Those who take this disease can never get well. No physicians can do them any good. No medicine can cure it. The disease shows itself in dreadful sores. After a person has had it for some time, his toes, and the ends of his fingers, will rot and drop off. And so it will go on, spreading over his body, till at last he dies a miserable death. This disease is what they call *infectious*, that is, persons can catch it from one another. If one person take it, in a family, or neighborhood, other persons are liable to take it from him. It is not safe, therefore, for a person who has this disease to go about among other people. For this reason the peo-

ple, in the neighborhood of which I am speaking, built a large house, as a hospital, for the use of those persons who had this disease. The house had a large yard about it, and this was surrounded by a great high wall, like a prison. The people who had this disease were required to go and live in this hospital. But, those who went in were never allowed to come out again. They were obliged to stay in there till they died. They were supplied with food, and all they needed, from without; but they were never permitted to come out and see their friends, and no one was permitted to go in, unless he was willing to stay there as long as he lived.

There was a great number of those poor creatures in that dreadful place. They could never come out to go to church, and they had nobody to preach to them, and tell them the way to heaven.

But there was a good Moravian missionary, with his wife, living in that neighborhood. They thought a great deal about the poor creatures in that hospital, and pitied them so

much that, at last, they made up their minds to go in and live among them, for the sake of telling them about Jesus, and teaching them the way to heaven. Now, when those good missionaries bade good-by to their friends and went into that hospital, as if they were going into a living grave, never to come out of it till they died, you see at once, how they showed their kindness to those poor lepers, *by their actions.* How wonderful that kindness was!

And yet the kindness of Jesus to us is greater far than this. This world of ours was like a great leprosy hospital. All the people in it had the dreadful leprosy of sin. And when Jesus saw that there was no other way in which we could be saved from this dreadful disease, he was willing to leave yonder glorious heaven, to live with us in this dark world; yes, and even to die for us here, that awful death upon the cross. Oh, what wonderful kindness and love Jesus has shown to us! By his words and by his actions; by what he has said and by what he has done, Jesus has

shown his kindness. He is the best friend because he is *the kindest friend.*

*The third reason why Jesus is the best friend is, because he is* THE ABLEST FRIEND.

When Jesus was in this world he said, "All power, in heaven, and on earth, is given unto me." He can do anything that he pleases, to help his friends. The angels of heaven are his servants, and stand waiting, all the time, to do whatever he tells them. The sun and the moon and the stars are his servants. When he made them, he hung them up in the sky, and told them to shine for him; and they have kept on shining, from that day to this. The winds of heaven, the waves of the sea, the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the creeping things of the earth are all his servants. All the people in the world, the kings, the great men, the rich men, the poor men, and all things that exist, down to a grain of sand, or the smallest insect, he employs in his service, and makes them do just what he wants to have done. The Bible tells us that Jesus can "make all things work

together for good to those who love him." How wonderful this is! I can't make all things work together for good for myself, or for those I love best. The greatest king in the world can't do it. The mightiest angel in heaven can't do it. But Jesus can do it, just as easily as you or I can bend our little finger. Jesus was the friend of the children of Israel, and when it was necessary for them to cross the Red Sea, and they had no way of getting over, he caused the waters to divide, and made a way for them to walk on dry ground right through the depths of the sea. On another occasion, it was necessary, for the good of the Israelites, that they should gain a great victory over their enemies, and that they might have time to do this, he made the sun and the moon stand still for a whole day.

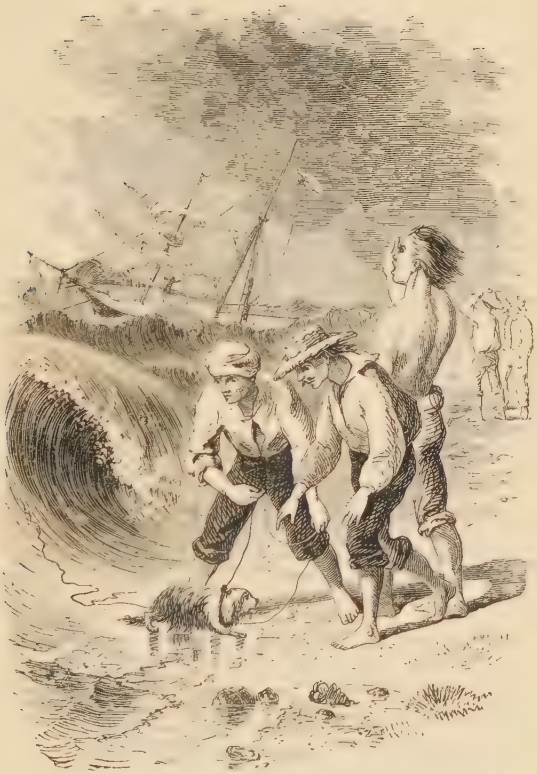
When it was necessary, for the good of his servant Elisha, he sent a whole army of angels to protect him from danger; as we read in the sixth chapter of the second book of Kings. What a privilege it is to have for our friend One who is able to make the sun shine and

the winds blow and the waves roll and the very angels of heaven come down, when he tells them, on purpose to do good to us! Yet this is just what Jesus can do.

And at the same time that he employs the mighty angels to do good to his people, he can make use of *the very least things*, about them, for the sake of doing them good.

Some years ago, there was a captain going to sea, from the port of Philadelphia. The day before he sailed, he went to visit a friend, over in West Philadelphia. The lady, in the house where he was visiting, gave him a little lap-dog, which she had grown tired of. The captain, who was a good Christian man, said he would take the little dog to sea with him. He little thought, then, how much good was to come to him through that tiny creature. The next day the lady was sorry she had parted with her pet dog, and sent to get him back; but it was too late. The captain had gone to sea. The vessel sailed to the West Indies. There she was wrecked, and driven on a dangerous shoal, not far from

one of the islands. The waves were breaking over her in great fury, and rolling up in foam and thunder on the shore. The people gathered on the shore to watch the wreck. But they had no life-boat, and could render no help. The boats belonging to the ship had been so injured by the storm that they were of no use. What was to be done? The ship would soon go to pieces, and all on board would perish unless they could be gotten off the wreck. The captain took the little dog which had been given to him, and, getting a ball of twine, he tied one end of the twine to the collar that was on the dog's neck, and then threw him overboard, into the sea. It seemed as though he would certainly be swallowed up in the angry sea; but presently they saw the little fellow, heading for the shore, and paddling away with all his might. The great waves would roll over him, the sailors would lose sight of him for a while, but, by and by, they would see him again, shaking his head above the water, and making straight for the shore. At last a big



wave rolled the little four-legged sailor safe up on the land, with the twine attached to his collar.

In the mean time the Captain had fastened a strong cord to the other end of the twine, on board the ship. When he saw the dog was safe on shore, he motioned to the people there to haul in the twine. They did so; and presently they got hold of the cord. To the end of the cord he fastened a stout rope, and to the end of the rope, what the sailors call a hawser, which is a rope about as thick as my wrist. When they got the hawser on shore, they made it fast to a tree, high up on the beach. Then the sailors, on board the vessel, hauled away on the other end of it, till it was pretty tight, or, as they call it on shipboard, "*taut*." When this was done they had a rope bridge, from the wreck to the shore. In this way they all got safe to land. Thus, you see, how Jesus made use of so small a thing as that little dog to save the lives of all on board that ship.

Let me give you another story to show how

Jesus is able to help his people, when they are in trouble, by something smaller even than a little lap-dog.

Some years ago, a poor widow woman was sitting by the window of her little cottage, one warm summer evening. Her little son, her only child, was standing near her, leaning against the window-frame. This poor widow loved the cottage in which she lived very much. It had been purchased by her husband, who had only been dead a few months. He himself had planted the choice fruit-trees, which were then so flourishing, and promised to bear an abundant crop of fruit.

But she felt very sad that evening; for she expected that that was the last evening she and her little son would ever spend in that cottage. Though their home had been bought and nearly all paid for, it was about to be taken from them. Her husband had borrowed five hundred dollars from a rich neighbor, with which to purchase the cottage. The agreement made between them was, that he was to pay fifty dollars a year of this money

till it was all returned. He had done this every, year and taken a receipt for the money, till the time of his death. Then there only remained fifty dollars to be paid off. Shortly after the owner of the cottage died, the rich neighbor, from whom he had borrowed the money, died also. The son of this man found among his father's papers a note stating that this poor man had borrowed five hundred dollars from him; but it said nothing about any of it having been paid back. So he called on the poor widow in the cottage to pay the five hundred dollars, which her husband had borrowed from his father. She told him that her husband had paid it all back but fifty dollars. He asked her to show him the receipts, to prove that the money had been paid. But she had lost her husband's receipt-book. She searched the cottage from top to bottom, but it could not be found. Then the man said he didn't believe that the money had been paid at all; that he would sell the cottage, and she must find another home. The next day the cottage was to be sold, and of course the poor

widow and her little boy felt sad enough to think that to-morrow they must leave their own dear home, without having any other to go to.

This poor woman was a Christian, but this trouble had come upon her so suddenly that she had hardly thought of looking to Jesus to help her. Freddy, her little boy, said to her, —

"Mother, don't you think that if we pray to Jesus, in our trouble, he will help us?"

"Yes, my child," she said. So they kneeled down together, and Freddy offered a sweet little prayer. He asked Jesus to help them in their trouble, and keep them from being turned out of their nice home, or else to please get them another.

When Freddy had risen from his knees, the first thing he saw was a large firefly, which had just come in at the window. He tried to catch it, but it dodged him, darting aside first here and then there. Freddy chased it round and round the room, without being able to get it. At last, it flew down to the floor, and crept under a chest of drawers that stood against the wall. Freddy got down on his knees, and

tried to get hold of it; but he couldn't reach far enough. He asked his mother to please pull the drawers away from the wall a little distance. She did so; and, in doing it, she heard something fall on the floor. She stooped to pick it up; and what do you think it was? It was *her husband's lost receipt-book*. Then she had the proof that the money had been paid. She went at once to the man who had ordered the cottage to be sold, and showed him the receipts. When he heard how the book had been found, he was so surprised at the wonderful way in which God had taken care of this poor widow, that he gave her a receipt in full for the remaining fifty dollars due on the cottage, and then it was all her own. How soon Jesus heard and answered Freddy's prayer! He answered it by means of that little firefly. That was just as good as if he had sent an angel from heaven to tell them where the lost book could be found. This shows us how easily Jesus can make use of the very greatest things, or the very smallest things, in order to help his people and do them

good. He is the best friend for the third reason, because he is *the ablest friend.*

*The fourth and last reason why he is the best friend is that he is* ALWAYS NEAR.

You may have the dearest, and most valuable friend in the world, but if he is far off from you when you most need his help, what good will it do you? How many persons have lost their lives just because the friend, on whom they trusted, was far away from them in the hour of danger or difficulty!

Most of you know the story of young Casabianca. You have often heard the piece about him, spoken in school, which begins, —

> "The boy stood on the burning deck,
> Whence all but he had fled," etc.

He was the son of a French admiral. His father commanded the French fleet in the battle of the Nile and had charge of the largest ship of war in the fleet. When the battle began, his father gave him a position on the quarter-deck, and told him not to leave it without his orders. The battle went on, and

raged terribly. Whole broadsides were fired at once. Masts were falling, timbers crashing, and cannon-balls flying in every direction. The shouts of the men and the cries and groans of the wounded were mingling together. In the midst of the battle the French admiral was killed, without his son knowing of it. Soon after his ship caught fire. The flames burst forth from the hatchways with great fury. They caught the rigging. They ran along the yards and mounted up the masts. Every part of that huge ship was wrapped in sheets of flame. This occurred at midnight. What a contrast that blazing ship made with the gloom of the surrounding darkness! The battle ceased for a while. All stood still to watch that burning ship. The flames swept on. The men fled from the blazing wreck. But Casabianca stood still upon that burning deck. His father had told him to stay. He wouldn't go without his leave. He didn't know that he was dead. He cried, "Father, is my duty done? May I go?" But there was no answer. Ah! if that father

could only have been near, how quickly he would have said. "Go, my boy;" — and he would have been saved. But he was not near. The brave fellow wouldn't go without leave. The flames swept on. They reached the powder magazine. There was a tremendous explosion. The ship was blown to atoms, —

> "But the noblest thing that perished there
> Was that young, faithful heart."

We read in English history, that, during the reign of the celebrated Queen Elizabeth, there was a certain nobleman, known as the Earl of Essex, who was the particular favorite of the queen. One day, it is said that the queen gave him a ring, telling him to keep it, and that, if he ever got into any trouble, and was in danger of his life, to send that ring to her, and she would pardon him whatever offence he had committed, and would save his life. Some years after, he lost the favor of the queen, and committed some great offence against the government. He was tried for his offence, found guilty, and condemned to be

beheaded. Now, if the queen had only been near, he could have shown her the ring, and she would have pardoned and saved him; but she was far off. Then he concluded to send the ring to her. He gave it to a certain lady, who pretended to be his friend, but was not. He told her to take it directly to the queen, and show it to her. But she kept the ring. The queen never saw it, and the Earl of Essex lost his head.

But Jesus is the best friend, because he is *always near*. No time, or place, or distance can ever separate him from his people. When Jacob went out from his father's house, all by himself, to go to his Uncle Laban's, he felt very sad and lonely. But God appeared to him, the very first night after he left home, in that beautiful dream which he had about the ladder reaching down from heaven to earth, with the angels going up and down on it. And God said to him, "I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee to thy father's house again."

What a sad condition Jonah was in when the sailors threw him overboard, and the whale had swallowed him alive, and carried him, in that living prison, far down into the depths of the sea! Suppose all the kings in the earth had been Jonah's friends, — what could they have done for him? Nothing. But Jesus was his friend. He prayed to him, and he brought him safe to land.

Jesus is the best friend, *because he is the oldest friend; because he is the kindest friend; because he is the ablest friend; and because he is always near.*

The most important thing in the world for you, my dear children, is to have Jesus for your friend. He wants to have you for his friends. If you give him your hearts, and try to love and serve him, he will be your friend, and then you will be happy forever. Here is a short prayer, which the youngest of you may use:

Lord Jesus Christ, teach me to love Thee, and be Thou my friend forever.

Offer this prayer with all your heart, every

day : and then Jesus, the Best Friend, — "the friend that sticketh closer than a brother," — will be your friend and will bring you safe to heaven at last.

# VI.

## The Secret of Safety.

Whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely.—PROVERBS 1 : 33.

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Whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely. — *Proverbs* 1 : 33

Suppose you should see a mad dog, or a runaway horse, racing down the street as you were going quietly along, — would you not want to get out of the way? Yes; for nobody likes to be in the way of meeting such dangers. You would want to stand aside, or step into an open door, or get into a place of safety. We all love to be *safe* when danger is near. Look at the locks and bolts upon the doors of our houses. What do we put them there for? To keep us safe from thieves and robbers. Look at the lightning-rods, running up the walls of our houses and stretching up above the top of the roofs. What are these for, but to keep us safe from lightning? When our ships and steamers go to sea, they have life-boats with them. What for? Why, in case of shipwreck, that the crew and passengers may be safe.

You have all read books about the fairies. Those curious little creatures — of course they never really existed at all — were supposed to have the power of taking care of people, and of keeping them safe.

In Africa, and other heathen countries, the people make great use of what are called gree-grees. These are charms, made out of various tritling things, and which are supposed to have the power of guarding them against witches and sickness, and of thus keeping them safe. Now, all these things show us that there is a very strong desire in the hearts of people to be safe. We all have this desire. When we know there is any danger near us, we all want to be guarded against it, or to be safe. God knew that we should have this feeling, and, therefore, he has written a great many of the promises of his blessed Word on purpose to show us what we must do in order to be safe. For this reason God calls himself the *Fortress*, the *Refuge*, the *Hiding-place* of his people. For this reason we read, in one place in the Bible, "The name of the Lord is

a strong tower, the righteous fleeth into it and *is safe*." Proverbs 18 : 10. And so, in our text, we read, "Whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell *safely*." This promise is not made for everybody. It is only made for those who "hearken" unto God. You all know what "hearken" means. It means to hear what God says, and *mind it*, or do it. Now, God tells us all to repent and believe in Jesus. He tells us to love him and try to please him in everything that we do. But if we do this, we are Christians. To hearken unto God, therefore, means to be true Christians. And the important lesson which this verse teaches us is *the secret of safety*. It teaches us that Christian people, or those who love Jesus, are always safe. They dwell safely. The angels of God encamp around them. The Lord himself is their keeper. He holds them in the hollow of his hand. He keeps them as the apple of his eye. But this doesn't mean that, if you become a Christian, you will never get sick, or never die. It doesn't mean that when Christian soldiers go

to war, they will never get wounded, or be killed. It doesn't mean that if Christian sailors go to sea, they will never be shipwrecked or drowned. But it *does* mean that nothing of this kind will ever be allowed to happen to them, unless God sees it will be best for them. Sometimes sickness, trial, or disappointment is the very best thing that can happen to a person. When God sees that this is the case, he will let that sickness, or trial, or disappointment come. But when it comes, he watches over it carefully, and directs it in such a way that it will only do good to the person to whom it is sent.

For example: suppose I had a great lump of golden ore, as big as my head, brought to me from a gold mine in California. I can see the pieces of gold shining and sparkling in it, here and there. I know it is worth a great deal of money. But then the gold is not pure. It is all mixed up with earth and pieces of rock. And in this state it is of no use. Before it is fit to be coined into money, or worked up into jewelry, it must be entirely separated from the

earth and rock that are mingled with it. And how is this to be done? Why, the lump of ore must be broken into pieces, and put into a furnace, and a fire of great heat must be kindled on it, till the whole mass becomes red-hot, and then the gold will melt and run away from all the worthless earth mixed up with it, and will come out of the furnace entirely pure. Suppose, now, that my lump of ore was alive, and could think, and feel, and hear, and speak. I come to it one day with a great sledge-hammer in my hand, and say, "My dear golden fellow, I want to get you separated from all this good-for-nothing earth that is clinging to you. But in order to do this, I shall have to hit you some hard blows, and break you into pieces, and put you in the furnace. I know that this will be very trying for you to bear; but it is the only way in which you can be made pure, and fit to be used as gold. I will take care, however, that you are not injured. Not a grain of you shall be lost. You will be just as safe *in* the furnace as *out* of it; so don't be afraid." Well, if my lump of ore was a reasonable one,

and had confidence in me, it would heave a sigh, or drop a tear, perhaps; but then it would soon brace itself up with a noble resolution, and say, "It's all for the best, I know, — hammer away."

Now, God's people in this world are like gold in the ore. I mean by this they have a good many sins and imperfections remaining about them; and the trials and afflictions, which God permits to come upon them in this life, are the hammer by which he breaks them in pieces, and the furnace by which he melts and purifies them.

For instance, there is Joseph. When he was a youth, in his father's house, he was like a lump of golden ore. But God wanted to have this ore purified and made ready for the important use he had to make of it. And so Joseph was persecuted by his brethren, and sold into Egypt, and put in prison there. These trials were like the heavy blows of the hammer, and the fierce flames of the furnace. They purified the gold of Joseph's character, and made him fit for his high position in the

court of Pharaoh. And Joseph was *safe* all the while he was going through those trials. God was with him in the pit where his brethren cast him; and God was with him in the prison in Egypt. And so, through all his trials, Joseph found the words of our text to be true: "Whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely." *This shows us the secret of safety.*

Here we start a question. *From what are God's people safe?* *Three* answers may be given to this question. *In the first place, they are safe* FROM EVIL SPIRITS.

The Bible tells us that Satan is the head or chief of these evil spirits. It tells us, too, that "like a roaring lion he goeth about continually seeking whom he may devour." And what is true of Satan is true of all the other evil spirits; they are going about, all the time, trying to lead people into sin, and so to destroy them. We cannot see these evil spirits, when they come about us, any more than we can the good angels. And we should know nothing about the way in which they try to do

people harm, if it were not for what we learn from the Bible. There is one case mentioned in the Bible which shows us, very clearly, how it is that Satan and his evil spirits try to injure and destroy God's people, and how God keeps them safe from all their efforts. I refer here to the case of Job. Job was a good man. God said, when speaking of him, that he was "a perfect and an upright man, one that feared God and departed from evil, and there was none like him in the earth." He had a very large family, consisting of ten children: seven sons and three daughters. He was very rich, too. *Now*, if you want to show how rich a man is, you tell how many thousands or hundreds of thousands of dollars he owns. But *then*, when Job lived, they reckoned a man's wealth by the number of cattle that belonged to him. And we are told that Job owned seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she-asses, and a very great household. So that he was the greatest of all the men in the East where he lived. He was

such an uncommonly good man that, as he passed along the streets, not only the common people, but even the princes, would stop talking, and stand still, and gaze upon him. People felt that it was a real pleasure just to look at him, or to hear him speak. "He was eyes to the blind, and feet was he to the lame. The blessing of those who were ready to perish came upon him: and he caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. He was a father to the poor, and he delivered the oppressed, and those who had none to help them." What a lovely character this pious old patriarch must have been! And now just see how Satan tried to ruin him.

It happened one day that God was speaking to some of the angels about Job. He was praising him and saying what an uncommonly good man he was. Satan heard what the Lord said, and he began at once to speak against Job. Says he, "I don't believe he is a good man at all. He only pretends to be good because you have done so much for him. Why, you have made a hedge about him, and

about all that he has. You have never let anything hurt him: and have been pouring blessings upon him all his days. Now, just stop giving him blessings, and let me take away his property, and then we'll see what will become of his religion. Why, he'll be ready to turn right round, and curse you to your face."

Then God told Satan he might try him. So Satan went to make the trial. He got a troop of robbers to go and steal Job's oxen. He hurled the lightning and the thunderbolts upon his sheep, and destroyed them all. He sent an army of Chaldeans to carry off his camels. His sons and daughters were all enjoying themselves at a feast, in the house of their elder brother. But while they were eating and drinking, Satan raised a mighty tempest, which burst upon the house with great violence. The house fell, and all the good man's children were killed on the spot. All this happened at once. One messenger came and told him of the loss of his oxen and asses. Before he was done, another came to

tell him of the loss of his camels. Before he was done, another came to tell him of the loss of his sheep. And before he was done, another came to tell him the worst tidings of all, — of the death of his children. The whole ten were killed at a stroke. Not one was left. How dreadful this was! It was like plunging him into a sea of troubles, and letting all its waves roll over him! And how did Job act, under the weight of all this trial? Did he give up his religion, and turn round and curse God, as Satan said he would? Not at all. But we read that "Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head," — these were the signs people used in those days to express great sorrow, — and "fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, and said, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Oh, what a good man he was!

Then God said to Satan, "Well, what do you think of Job now?"

"Oh," said Satan, "he doesn't care much for his property or children so long as he on-

ly has his health. But just let me take away his health, and visit him with pain and sickness, and then you'll see how he'll curse you.'

God said he might try him again. Then Satan went and smote him with a dreadful disease, which broke out in painful boils and sores from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot. And Job laid himself down in the dust, and said, "Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not also receive evil?"

Thus God permitted Satan to put Job in the furnace of affliction, and to keep him there a good while. But he was safe all the time. For, as the hymn says,

> "The flame did not hurt him, its only design
> Was his dross to consume, and his gold to refine."

Job said himself, while he was in this furnace, "When I am tried, I shall come forth as gold." Job 23: 10. And so it turned out; for after a while God brought him safely out of all his troubles. He restored him to health. He gave him as many children as he

had before, and *twice as many* sheep and oxen and camels and asses. The very best thing that ever happened to Job was when Satan told lies about him, and persuaded God to put him in the furnace. Job was a richer, better, happier man afterwards than ever he was before; yes, or than ever he *would have been*, if he had not been put in that furnace. He is happier now in heaven for it, and he will be happier through all eternity. So that you see, Satan was really Job's best friend, when he only intended to be his worst enemy. We read in the Bible that God "makes all things work together for good to those who love God." And here we see how it is that God does it.

But God made it work for good to others, as well as to Job, when Satan tried so hard to injure him. We never should have had the example of Job's wonderful patience, if it had not been for this. This example has been a blessing to the church in all ages. And then we should not have understood, as we do now, how entirely Satan is under God's control if

it had not been for what he did to Job. He has wonderful power, but he can't use any of it till God lets him. He is a great, roaring lion, but he is a *chained* lion, and *God holds the chain in his own hand.* Job was safe from Satan's power. He wanted very much to injure or destroy Job; but he could not touch a hair of his head till God gave him leave. And then he could not go a hair's breadth beyond what God told him he might do. And Satan has no more power over you or me, or any of God's people, than he had over Job. He may *hate* us as much as he pleases, but he can't *hurt* us while we are God's people, or while we "hearken unto him." There is truth in the lines of the hymn which says that,

> "Satan trembles when he sees
> The weakest saint upon his knees."

"Whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely." From what are God's people safe? *Our first answer is*, they are safe *from evil spirits.*

*Our second answer is, they are safe* FROM EVIL MEN.

The best way of showing you how God keeps his people safe from evil men will be by giving you some illustrations of it. Here is one illustration.

Many years ago some Moravian missionaries were sailing from London, to the island of St. Thomas, in the West Indies, where they were going to labor among the slaves. One day, when they were about half way across the ocean, they saw a pirate vessel bearing down upon them. The vessel in which the missionaries were sailing was called the Britannia. The captain resolved to put his ship in order, and arranged his men so as to make the best defence he could. But while the sailors were getting ready to fight, the missionaries went down into the cabin to get ready to pray. They felt as if they could do more good in that way than in any other. And that was true.

The pirate drew nearer, and, as soon as he came within range of his guns, he began to fire

away. He had his grappling irons ready. These were strong, sharp hooks, fixed to long ropes, to throw into the ship and hold her fast, while they came on board to rob, and murder as they pleased. The captain of the English vessel saw no chance of escaping from such an enemy, and his heart sunk at the dreadful prospect before him. He little knew what powerful helpers he had in those few praying missionaries. But amidst all the noise occasioned by the heavy tramp of the men on deck, and by the dreadful roar of the cannons, their fervent prayers were going up to heaven.

Presently the pirates tried to throw their grappling irons across to the English ship; but, just at that moment, their own ship gave a violent lurch, and the men who held the irons were thrown into the sea. The pirate made another trial, but the same thing happened again. Then he resolved to fire at the Britannia till she sank. But he failed in this also. Sometimes the balls would miss their aim, and fall into the sea. At other

times, the dense smoke from the discharge of the guns would hang strangely about his ship, so that he could not see where the other vessel was. At last, after one of these discharges, when a sudden gust of wind cleared away the smoke, which had been hanging round his vessel, like a curtain, he saw, to his amazement, the Britannia, with her sails all spread to the wind, bounding away from him and fairly out of his reach. Thus those good missionaries, who hearkened unto God, were kept safe from evil men.

About five years afterwards, that pirate captain met those missionaries on the island of St. Thomas. He was not a pirate then, but a Christian, and he told them that the wonderful way in which their vessel had escaped him was the first thing that led him to think seriously about his wicked life and to resolve to change it.

Here is another illustration of the way in which God keeps his people safe from evil men.

Many years ago the people in Scotland, called Covenanters, used to be very much per-

reputed, on account of their religion. They were forbidden to meet together for worship: and bands of soldiers were kept marching about the country for the purpose of hunting up those who held meetings, and of putting them in prison. On one occasion, a little company of these persecuted people had met to have worship, in a little dell, or valley, on the side of a lofty hill. In the midst of their worship, they found that a troop of dragoons were coming over the hill, and would pass by in sight of them. What could they do? There was no place to hide in, and no time to get out of the way. They remained where they were, simply praying to God to take care of them; and God kept them safe, in this way. There were mists and clouds scattered over the side of the mountain. These seemed to be floating about, without any guidance. But just before the horsemen came in sight, over the top of the hill, these clouds gathered, and settled down over the dell in which the Covenanters were assembled. The mists were spread out like a curtain all round about them,

so that, though the soldiers rode by the place, within about a hundred and fifty yards, they never saw one of them. Thus you see how these people, "who hearkened unto the Lord, dwelt safely." They were safe from evil men.

Here is one more illustration of this part of our subject.

Some years ago, there lived in England an excellent minister, whose name was Rowland Hill. Mr. Hill had a gardener, who had always been considered an honest, worthy man. But, at last, it was found out that he had been guilty of a number of robberies in the neighborhood. He would never have been suspected, only he was caught in the act. He was tried, found guilty, and condemned to be executed. Of course Mr. Hill visited him, while he was confined in the jail. During one of these interviews he confessed the many crimes of which he had been guilty. "How did it happen, James," said Mr. Hill, "that you never robbed me, when you had so many opportunities of doing it?" "I tried to, sir, but I couldn't. Do you remember the juniper

bush in the garden near the dining-room window? Many a time I hid myself there at night, intending, which I could easily have done, to get into the house, and plunder it: but, sir, I was afraid: something seemed to say to me, 'He is a man of God: this is a house of prayer: if you break in, you'll surely be found out;' so I never could pluck up courage to do it. And then there is that old Mr. Rugg," — referring to one of the very best men belonging to Mr. Hill's church, — "I often made up my mind to rob him, but I never could do it. I knew he was in the habit of carrying a great deal of money in his pocket, and many times have I hid myself behind the hedge of the lane leading to his house; he has passed within a yard of me when he was going home from the prayer-meeting; but I could not stir. I did not dare to touch so good a man. I always began to tremble as soon as he came near me, and gave up the thought altogether, for I know he was a holy man."

These were men who *hearkened unto the*

*Lord;* and here you see how he caused them to "dwell safely." They were safe from *evil men.*

*But there is a third answer to be given to the question,* from what are God's people safe? *They are* SAFE FROM ALL OTHER EVILS.

There are a great many other dangers, in this world, to which we are exposed, besides the two already spoken of; but those who "hearken unto the Lord shall dwell safely," in the midst of them all. Noah was in great danger, when the flood came to destroy an ungodly world; but he dwelt safely in the ark while the waters were sweeping round the world. The children of Israel were in great danger, in the waste howling wilderness, through which they had to pass; but they dwelt safely there during all the forty years of their journeyings. Daniel was in the midst of great danger when thrown into the den of hungry lions; and yet he really never was safer, when sleeping in his own chamber, than he was all through that night which he spent among those ravenous beasts. His three friends, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego,

were in great danger when they were cast into the midst of the burning, fiery furnace; and yet how safely they walked up and down amidst its scorching flames, without having even a hair of their head singed!

And the God who did all these wonderful things, of which we read in the Bible, to cause his people to dwell safely, can keep them safe now, in the midst of danger, as easily as he did then.

Let me give you some examples to prove this. There was a good man who lived in New England, many years ago, whose name was Elias Boudinot. He was the founder of the American Bible Society. He was returning home in his chaise late, one dark night, from a neighboring town where he had been attending court. There had been a freshet while he was gone, which had carried away all the planks from the long bridge which lay in his accustomed path. He knew nothing about this; so he drove right on, as usual, and got home in safety. His friends asked him by what road he came. "Why, the usual road,

of course," he replied. "That's impossible," said they, "for all the planks have been washed away." "I don't know anything about that," said he, "but I know that I drove my horse across that bridge, planks or no planks." His friends said that either he must be out of his mind, or else he was telling them a falsehood. He told them he would go with them in the morning and see. Accordingly they went the next morning, and when they arrived there, they found the tracks of the carriage at either end of the bridge, and along the beams which lay across it. There was one beam on each side, and another beam in the middle; and in the deep darkness of the night, when neither the horse nor the rider could see where he was going, the feet of the horse were guided, by an unseen hand, on the middle beam and the wheels on the side beams; and the same gracious, but Almighty hand kept them from turning aside, either to the right hand or to the left, till the river was safely crossed.

This is a simple fact; but it shows us how

the God of the Bible can keep his people safe from all evil now, as easily as he did in old times.

I dare say you have often wondered at the way in which God kept the prophet Elijah safe, during the famine in Israel, by causing the ravens to bring him bread and meat every day. And yet God often provides for his people now, in a very similar way. A good many years ago, there was a dreadful massacre in France, known as the massacre of St. Bartholomew. For three days every Protestant who was found was killed. Admiral de Coligny, the chief man among the Protestants, was put to death in his own house, by order of the King of France. The admiral's chaplain, whose name was Merlin, managed to escape from the murderers, and concealed himself in a hay-loft. Here, he was obliged to remain for weeks. He was afraid to come out and seek for food, lest he should be put to death. But the same God, who sent the ravens to keep the prophet alive, sent a hen to keep the chaplain alive. This hen came every

day, and laid an egg close by his place of concealment. Thus his life was preserved till the danger that threatened him had passed away.

God can make use of the smallest and the meanest things in promoting the safety and comfort of his people.

There was a good prince once, who had been very much troubled by the multitude of flies that infested his palace, and the spiders, too, which were all the time weaving their webs to catch the flies. He was so troubled with them one day that he said he could not see what God had made the flies and the spiders for, and that for his part he would like to kill every one of them.

One day, after a great battle, this prince, who had been defeated, was obliged to fly from his enemies. He was wandering about in the woods, and, being very weary, he lay down to sleep. Presently there came along a soldier belonging to his enemies. He saw the prince, and, with his drawn sword in his hand, was hastening toward him, intending to kill him. Just then God caused a fly to light on his ear,

and tickle him. This awoke the prince, who, seeing the soldier coming toward him, instantly drew his sword and killed him.

The next night, the prince hid himself in a cave in the same wood. As soon as he had entered it, and lain down to sleep, God caused a spider to come and weave her web across the entrance. In the morning, two soldiers, belonging to the army which had defeated the prince, were going through the wood, searching for him. As they came in sight of the cave, one of them said, —

"I dare say he's in this cave; let's go in and see."

"No," replied the other, "that's impossible. Don't you see that spider's web stretched across the entrance? He never could have got in without brushing away that web. Wherever else he is, you may be sure he is *not* there. So it's not worth while to waste time in looking." And so they passed on. As soon as they were gone, the prince fell on his knees and thanked God for having saved his life yesterday by a fly, and now by a spider.

He confessed how wrong he had been in speaking against any of God's works and resolved not to do so again.

Two very interesting instances of the way in which those who hearken unto God dwell safely are told of Bishop Gobat, the present English Bishop of Jerusalem. Before he was made bishop, he had, for many years, been a missionary among the Druses in the mountains of Lebanon, and other tribes in the wildest parts of Syria. Here he was much persecuted, exposed to many dangers, and often greatly discouraged. On one occasion, while journeying on foot over the mountains, the thought of his many dangers and his little success discouraged him greatly, and made him feel very sad. He felt his need of comfort, and resolved to stop and spend some time in prayer. Looking round for a suitable place, he saw a cave in the side of the mountain. He went in some distance, till he was hid from view in the darkness of the cave. There he kneeled down and poured out his heart to God in earnest prayer. He told him of all

his dangers, trials, and discouragements, and prayed that he would keep him in safety, and give him strength and comfort to go on with his work.

When he had done praying, he looked round about him in the darkness of the cave, and lo! not far from him, over in the corner, were two fierce eyes glaring, like balls of fire, upon him. *It was a hyena with her young.* He had gone into the den of that savage creature, and kneeled down to pray so near her that a single leap would have brought her to him. Yet she had not stirred, nor offered to harm him. He left that cave and went on his way encouraged and comforted. He said to himself, "Surely, the God who has kept me safe in the very jaws of this wild beast will keep me safe from all other evils."

What a beautiful illustration this is of our text, "Whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely."

But there is another story about this good man, Bishop Gobat, which I must tell you before I stop. And this is connected with a

hyena, too. The circumstance occurred before he was made bishop, and while he was a missionary in that part of the country of which we have just been speaking.

One day, a messenger came to him from a heathen chief, begging him to come to him, as he wished to talk with him about the religion of Christ. This was good news to the missionary. He sent word to the chief that he would come and visit him in a few days. But then he was taken sick, and was unable to go for several days. Then came a second messenger with a more earnest invitation. He told him he would go with him the next day, and he prepared for the journey. But, just as he was leaving his house, a letter was brought him saying that the vessel in which he had engaged his passage to go to Malta would sail the next day at noon. What was he to do? The messenger told him that if they set out at once he would be able to spend the night with the chief, and still to reach the ship in time, the next day. So Mr. Gobat concluded to start.

The messenger and some of the Druses went with him. Their journey lay through the woods and over the wild mountains. At one of the villages, on the way, they were delayed several hours. Then they lost their way, and before they found it again it began to get dark. The guides said if they went on, they could reach the village, where the chief lived, about midnight; but that the path went winding round among frightful precipices, and that it was a very dangerous one to travel in the dark. The good missionary thought for a moment what they had better do. But his heart was burning with a desire to tell the chief about Jesus, so he said, "Well, let us trust in God and go on." So they started. Presently the moon came out. Suddenly, where the path was very narrow and running close by the edge of a great precipice, they saw, by the light of the moon, a huge hyena lying right across the path. The Druses shouted and threw stones at the savage beast. Then it sprang up and ran before them in the direction in which they

were to go. But now the Druses came to a stand. They said it was a saying among their people, that "the way a hyena goes is an unlucky way." They wouldn't go another step. Mr. Gobat tried to persuade them to go on, but in vain. Then the messenger from the chief told the missionary that if they should stop for the night at a neighboring village, they could still, by starting very early in the morning, have time for him to spend an hour with the chief, and be able to get back to the sea-coast before the vessel sailed. Mr. G. resolved to do this. But, as they were all very tired with their journey, instead of waking early in the morning they slept till a late hour; and when they woke it was too late to go on. So, much against his will, Mr. G. was obliged to give up the visit to the chief. He had to hasten down the mountain to the coast, which he reached only just in time to take his passage in the ship. All through the voyage he reproached himself for having lost the opportunity of visiting the chief; and it seemed very strange that the hyena should

have been permitted to come in his way when he was so near reaching the end of his journey.

But while he was at Malta, he received a letter from a friend at his home in Lebanon, who told him that the chief had no desire to hear about Christ at all, but that the whole thing was a wicked plot, which he had arranged in order to get the missionary into his power, that he might put him to death. When the chief heard of the wonderful way in which his wicked plan had been disappointed, he was convinced that the missionary was the servant of God, and he became his true friend.

And thus we see how true the words of the text are, "Whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely."

God's people are safe, *in the first place, from evil spirits; safe, in the second place, from evil men; and safe, in the third place, from all other evils.*

My dear young friends, I have tried to tell you a *great secret* in this sermon. It is the secret of true safety. If you would be safe at

all times, and in all places, love Jesus and make him your friend. "Hearken unto him," and then you will dwell safely. The last verse of the psalm we often sing at these services says, —

"Fear him, ye saints, and you will then
Have nothing else to fear :
Make you his service your delight,
Your wants shall be his care."

I will close with quoting two verses of one of John Newton's beautiful hymns, which tells us the same truth very sweetly, —

"That man no guard nor weapon needs
Whose heart the blood of Jesus knows ;
But safe may pass, when duty leads,
Through burning sands or mountain snows.

"His love possessing, I am blest ;
Secure, whatever change may come.
Whether I go to east or west,
With him I still shall be at home"

# VII.

## The Best Name.

A name which is above every name. — PHIL. 2 : 9

# VII.

A name which is above every name. — *Phil.* 2: 9.

This refers to Jesus. It is his name which is spoken of here. His name was first heard, in this world, from the lips of an angel. The angel Gabriel came down to tell about him before he was born; and he told his mother that when he was born she must call his name *Jesus*. I suppose you can all tell me the meaning of the name Jesus? It is *Saviour;* and he was to receive this name, the angel said, "because he shall save his people from their sins." There are a great many things said in the Bible about the name Jesus. In one place it is called a "holy" name; in another, it is called a "worthy" name, in another, an "excellent" name, a "great" name, a "glorious" name, a "blessed" name, an "everlasting" name, a "wonderful" name; and here in our text, "a name which is above

every name." This is the best name in all the world.

The subject of our present sermon, then, will be "*The Best Name.*" And I wish to give you *four* reasons why the name of Jesus is the best name.

The *first* is, *because it is* SO SIMPLE. It is a very little word of but five letters. Now, some persons love to give their children long names, and great names, and many names. Why, I was reading, only the other day, about a list of names given not long ago to a little princess. It began, Donna Maria, Theresa, Josephine, Eugenia, Louisa, Clementina, Imaculata, and so it went on to some fourteen or fifteen names, all for one little baby girl. "But God's thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor his ways as our ways;" for, when God was going to send his only begotten Son into the world, — the greatest and most glorious and blessed Being that ever lived, — he only chose one little name, "Thou shalt call his name *Jesus.*" There are, indeed, *a great many other names in the Bible*, which refer to

Jesus. He is called The Christ, The Messiah, The Shiloh, The Lord, The Redeemer, The Morning Star, The Sun of Righteousness, The Lily of the Valley, The Rose of Sharon, The Plant of Renown, The Balm of Gilead; and many other titles are applied to him. Indeed, almost everything useful and beautiful is used in the Bible to represent some part of the character of Jesus. But, out of all these, the name which God chose to give him at his birth, and the name which he most loves his people to use, when praying to him, or speaking of him, is the name *Jesus*. This is the best of all names. And the first reason for this is *because it is so simple.*

It is best, in the second place, *because it is* SO FULL OF MEANING. It is a little name, but at the same time it is a great name. It is both little and great.

There was an infidel once walking in the country, who met a little boy with a New Testament under his arm. He stopped him and said, "My little man, what book is that you have?" "It is a New Testament, sir," said

the boy. "Do you believe there is a God?" asked the man. "Yes," said the little boy, looking with surprise into his face, "I *know* there is a God." "Well," said the man, who wanted to make fun of the little fellow and of his religion, "will you tell me, is your God a little God or a great God?" Looking up again, the boy said, "Well, sir, he is *both*." "Ah," said the man, "how can that be?" "Why, sir, he is so little that he can come and dwell in my wicked heart, yet he is so great that all the world can't hold him."

So it is with the name of Jesus; it is so little that almost every child may understand something about it; and yet it is so great, so vast, that you will never be able to tell all that is in it. *Our* names are very little things, and so are we that the names belong to, but yet they have a meaning. The name John means "the gift of God;" James means the "Supplanter;" William means "the Shield of many;" Charles means strong; Richard means liberal; David means beloved; George means a farmer or husbandman; Francis

means free; Samuel means a prophet,—one who hears from God; Mary means either exalted or bitter; Margaret means a pearl, precious; Jane means gracious; Ann means merciful; Lucy means light, clear; Elizabeth means the oath of God; Emma means either a nurse, — that is, one who is affectionate, — or a bee, one who is busy or industrious. Our names are very little things. They are like little vessels of water, into which you can dip your finger to the bottom, and tell how deep they are in a moment; while the name of Jesus, with the glorious character it belongs to, is like the great ocean, without bounds and without bottom. There are shallow places, along the shore of the ocean, where a child may wade in safety, and then there are other places so deep that the longest line cannot find the bottom. And just so it is with the name of Jesus. All that is in the Bible grows out of it. The name of Jesus stands for the whole Bible; and all that it contains was written to help us to understand the meaning of this one name. The Bible is the revelation of Jesus

Christ; and there is nothing in it from first to last that is not intended to teach us something about him, and his wonderful name. You know, my dear children, if you take up any book in our language, to read, all the words in it are made up from the twenty-six letters of the alphabet. Now the five letters in the name of Jesus are the alphabet of the Bible. All its histories, all its prophecies, all its promises, all its prose and all its poetry, have something to do with Jesus, and are made up, as it were, out of the letters of his name.

We may study the Bible all the days of our life, even if we should live to be as old as Methuselah, and we shall always find something new in it about the name of Jesus; and if we should go to heaven, there, too, we shall study this blessed name for millions and millions of years, and we shall never understand all that is in it. This, then, is the second reason why it is the best of all names: *because it is so full of meaning.*

The *third* reason why it is the best name in the world is, *because it is* SO FULL OF POWER.

Oh, there is wonderful power in it! When the apostles were on earth they went about casting out devils, and doing many wonderful works; and it was by the name of Jesus they did them all. You know Moses did many wonderful works with his rod; but the apostles did their works by the power of this name; and once, when Peter and John saw a poor, lame man sitting at the gate of the temple, they came to him, and said, "In the *name* of Jesus of Nazareth, rise up and walk;" and when he heard this name, he rose up and walked.

There is power in this name to do a great many things. *It has power to make people good.*

We read in the Bible about the conversion of the apostle Paul, and that was effected by this name. Before his conversion, St. Paul was a very wicked man, and he persecuted Christians because they loved the name of Jesus; casting them into prison, and even putting them to death. He was going one day to the city of Damascus, to get the Christians

there, and put them in prison and kill them. And while he was on his way, a great light, above the brightness of the sun, shone around him in his path. He fell to the earth, very much astonished. Then he heard a voice, speaking to him out of heaven, which said, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" On hearing this, he was still more astonished, and said, "Who art thou, Lord?" and the voice answered, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." And when Paul heard that name, he understood what it meant. He felt the power of it. It changed him at once. It took away all the wicked feeling that was in his heart, and he became a Christian. He learned to love the name of Jesus. And when he once began to understand the meaning, and feel the preciousness of this name, although it occasioned him the loss of all his earthly possessions and prospects, he felt it was a great gain, because the knowledge of Jesus was so excellent. And then, instead of being a persecuter, he became a preacher. He was the greatest preacher of that day, or, perhaps, of any

other. And God made him an apostle, to carry the gospel all over the earth, among the Gentiles. What power there must have been in the name of Jesus, to make so good a man out of one who was so wicked.

You have heard of the missionaries who go to all parts of the earth to preach the gospel. And I suppose you have heard about the missionaries who went to Greenland, that land of perpetual ice and snow. The people there were very ignorant. They knew nothing about Jesus, and the missionaries thought they were not ready to hear about him, until they had learned many other things; and so they began to teach them these things first. They taught them that there was a God, who made the world, and that he was everywhere present. They taught them that it was wrong to lie, or swear, or steal; and they spent twelve or fourteen years in teaching them about these things, before they began to tell them about Jesus. But it did them no good. They got no better. One day, however, the missionaries began to read to them in the New Testament, about

Jesus, about his birth and life, his crucifixion and death. This awakened their attention at once, and made a great impression upon them. When they heard it, they crowded around the missionaries, and said, "Oh, tell us that over again!" They repeated the story to them, and read to them the whole history of Jesus, until these poor people began to weep over their sins, and cry out, "What must we do to be saved?" Then numbers of them were converted, and it was the name of Jesus which made them Christians. Ah, there is a great power in the name to make people good.

*And there is a great power in the name of Jesus to make people rich as well as good.*

I dare say, you have all read the story of the "Forty Thieves." It is not a true story, but it does very well to illustrate the point of which I am now speaking. You know the story says, that there was a woodman once, in a forest cutting down trees, when he heard a band of robbers approaching, and saw their long train of horses come winding over the hills, toward the place where he was. He quickly climbed

into one of the trees, where he could watch their motions without being seen. They rode up on their horses till they came to a great rock; where, dismounting, the captain of the band walked up to the rock, and said, "Open Sesame." The very moment this word was spoken, a great door flew open, and they all went in and stowed away their plunder in the cave. The woodman watched in great surprise while all this was going on. He remembered the wonderful word "*Sesame*," which opened the door. So he remained quiet until the robbers were gone. As soon as they were out of sight, he came down from the tree, and went up to the rock and cried out, "*Open Sesame!*" Instantly the door flew open, and he went in. Then he gazed in wonder on all the precious things which were gathered together. Then he filled his panniers, or donkey baskets, with gold and silver, as much as the animal could carry, and went home a rich man. He was made rich by the power of the word "*Sesame*." But, as I said before, the story is not true.

Now, suppose, my dear children, that there was a cave in this country, filled with gold, and silver, and jewels: and that it was locked and fastened, so that no key could open it; but suppose there was one word alone that would unfasten that door, and that somebody should tell you what that word was, and give you permission to use it, and open the cave, and fill your bags with its treasure: would there not be power in that word to make you rich? But I need not tell you, my dear children, that there is no such cave of treasures in this world, and no such wonderful word to open it. But there is something better: there is a treasury full of all good things. There is a door to that treasury, too; but it is closed and fastened. No key, that man can make, will ever open that treasury. But yet, there is a key that will open it; and this key is a single word. And if that word is used aright, this door will fly open, and all who wish may enter in, and get everything that is necessary to make them rich and happy. This treasury is in heaven. The grace of God, and all the good things that belong to

him are in it. And the name, the only name, that will open it is the name of Jesus. Jesus said, when he was on earth, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father, in *my name*, he will give it you." If you are a sinner, and want pardon, the name of Jesus will get it for you. If your heart is very wicked, and you want to have it changed, the name of Jesus will change it. If you do not understand the Bible, and want to understand it, the name of Jesus will secure for you the influence of the Holy Spirit, and nothing but this can enable anybody to know its meaning. If you have evil passions, bad tempers and dispositions, and are striving against them, but feel that you cannot help yourself, if you seek it in the name of Jesus, you will obtain all the aid you need. And, whatever you require to make you truly rich and happy, he will give you if you ask him aright. Oh, there is wonderful power in the name of Jesus.

*There is also power in it to make people love him.* When people understand this name, and learn to love Jesus, they love him better than anything else in this world.

There was an old man once, who had loved and served Jesus Christ for eighty years, or more. He lived in a time when Christians were very sorely persecuted, on account of their religion. His name was Polycarp. At that time, the Roman Emperor was very angry with the Christians, and determined to seize all he could find, and throw them to the wild beasts to be devoured alive. Hearing of Polycarp, he sent for him, and on his appearing before him, commanded him to curse the name of Jesus. "I cannot do it," the old man mildly said. "If you don't, I will throw you to the wild beasts. Renounce the name of Jesus." Polycarp stood before the emperor, with his long, silvery locks, as white as the driven snow, hanging down over his shoulders, and said, — "I have loved Jesus for more than eighty years, and he has never disappointed or forsaken me — I cannot renounce him now." "Go to the wild beasts, then," said the wicked tyrant. And he was led out, blessing God for letting him die a martyr's death. He was not willing even to save his life, if he could only do it by renouncing Jesus.

There was another man, hundreds of years after Polycarp's time, who was on his way to the stake, to be burned to death. When he was walking to the place of execution, his wife and children were following him, and some one asked him, "Do you love your wife and children? Would you not like to live with them?" "Ah," said he, "I love them so, that if I possessed all the gold and silver in the world, I would gladly give it to be permitted to live with them, if it were only in a prison; but, compared with Jesus, I love them not at all." What power there must have been in the name of Jesus, to make him love so much!

There was another martyr, who was actually tied to the stake, burning to death. The flames were wrapping themselves around him, as you have seen them do around a burning stick. His arms, his hands and fingers were all on flame. And yet, before he died, he lifted up his burnt and blazing arms, and smote his hands together, crying, "None but Jesus! None but Jesus!" and then his spirit left his

poor, suffering body. Ah, there is wonderful power in this name to make people love Jesus!

But it has also power to do one other thing and that is, to make people *happy*.

But how does Jesus make us happy? Is it by giving houses and lands, — and gold and silver? Not at all, but by making us know and love him. This is the great secret of real happiness.

I was reading, not long ago, about a minister who used to visit a poor, sick man in his neighborhood. He lived in a very humble dwelling. It had but one room and although it was a pretty large room, there was very little in it. There was a sort of chair, hanging down from the ceiling, in which this poor cripple sat. He was very lame, and could not stand, or walk at all, or scarcely move a finger, but all day long and all night, too, he sat in his chair, propped up with pillows. When the minister went to see him, on one occasion, he said to him, "My friend, you must feel very lonely here, when you have no one in the house but yourself — do you not?" "No, sir," said he, "I do not feel lonely, for God is with

me." And looking on his pillow, he saw a Bible there, which his wife had left for him, while she had gone out to work, and he had been reading one of the Psalms of David. "Why," said the minister, "how do you manage? You seem to be very sick, and in great pain; your limbs are much swollen, and you cannot stir without suffering — I wonder you can live and be contented." "Well," said he, "I did not use to be contented, but since I have loved Jesus, he makes me so, and though I cannot move or walk, and at times can hardly speak, I can still look at the beautiful passages in his word; and that makes me glad, and when I cannot praise him with my lips, I praise him in my heart. I love my Saviour, and he makes me happy."

Here was one who was poor, friendless, and suffering; yet Jesus could make him happy. Yes, there is wonderful power in the name of Jesus to make people happy. This, then, is our third reason why the name of Jesus is the best name: *because it is full of power.* It has power to make people *good*, — power to make

them *rich*, — power to make them *love him*, and power to make them *happy*.

There is but one reason more I will give you, why the name of Jesus is the best name. And that is *because it* NEVER CHANGES.

You know, my dear children, that people's names often change in this life. All females change their names when they are married; and there are many other circumstances which lead people to have their names changed. We read in the Bible about Abraham's name being changed; and so we do of Jacob's and Peter's and Paul's. And people sometimes have their names changed now. All our names will be changed when we come to die. If you have a father or a mother or a dear friend in heaven, you know not by what names they are called there. You know what their names were on earth, but what they are in heaven you cannot tell. Jesus says in his word, that his people are called by a new name when they go to heaven; but nobody knows what that name will be until it is given them. A wonderful name, indeed, this will be, and

a blessed thing it will be for those who receive it.

But the name of Jesus *never* changes. Jesus was his name when he was upon the earth; and Jesus is his name now in heaven. And when he comes back again to this earth in glory, Jesus will be his name still.

Have you ever seen a Christian die? If so, you have found one of the last words upon his lips was the name of Jesus. He died speaking of Jesus, whispering perhaps the words, "Come, Lord Jesus, come, quickly." Or if he could not speak distinctly, still his lips would be muttering something about Jesus. He knew that Jesus was the name of his Saviour in this world, and, in the world to which he was going, he knew that Jesus would be his name still. There is a beautiful hymn in the prayer-book which says,

> "His name shall stand forever, —
> That name to us is love."

For these four reasons, the name of Jesus is the best name. *Because it is so simple*

*Because it is so full of meaning. Because it is so full of power. And because it never changes.*

Now, my dear children, can you wonder that Christians love the name of Jesus? Look at the last of the hymns, in our selection for to-day, and see what it says:—

> How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
> In a believer's ear;
> It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
> And drives away his fear."

It was thinking of this hymn that made me choose the text for our sermon to-day. I trust you may all learn to love the name of Jesus, and then you will be able to sing this hymn with your heart, and you will find great delight in it. Now, children, I want you to do two things in regard to this name. I want every one of you to pray to God to help you to understand it. If God should give you grace rightly to know and love this name, it will be the most blessed thing for you that can possibly be done. To understand the

meaning and feel the power of this name, will be better for you than to be in possession of all the riches this world can give. Oh, pray, then, my dear children, pray earnestly, now and always, that God may help you to understand and love this name "which is above every name."

And I want that you should do one thing more. It is just what we are doing in making this anniversary offering, — it is, that we should do all we can to send the knowledge of this name to those who are ignorant of it. Oh, there are hundreds and thousands who never heard it. They know nothing of the sweetness, simplicity, and power of this precious name. All over the world, there are multitudes, who never heard that Jesus lived and labored, taught, suffered and died for them; and I want you to do all you can to send the knowledge of his sweet name to them. I hope this is what we shall always live for. It is the only thing in this world worth living for; and I hope and pray that God may help us all to love that glorious name and spread it all abroad.

# VIII.

## A Tree of Life.

**She is a** tree of life to them that lay hold upon her.—PROVERBS **3: 18.**

# VIII.

She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her. — *Proverbs* 3 : 18.

What a beautiful thing a tree is! Its roots lie under ground hidden from view. But its solid trunk rises up before us with the appearance of great strength. How pleasantly its branches spread themselves out around the trunk! How beautiful is the form of the tree! The sight of its bright-green leaves is refreshing to the eye. The gentle rustling of its leaves, as the wind plays among them, is music to the ear. Everything about a tree is interesting to look upon. It is said of Dr. Kitto, who has written so much about the Bible, that he loved to look at trees so much that he was not willing to have any room for a study, unless there was a tree near it which he could look at through the window.

But in our text Solomon is speaking about "a tree of life." This is a kind of tree which

none of us have ever seen. But we read about such a tree in the beginning of the Bible. There we have an account given of the beautiful garden in which the Lord put Adam and Eve when they were created, and "in the midst of the garden was *the tree of life*." We know very little about this tree. I suppose it was one of the most beautiful trees in the garden. It had the power of making those who ate of its fruit to live forever. And it is singular, that, when St. John is describing the New Jerusalem, or heaven, at the close of the book of the Revelation, he tells us that he saw the tree of life growing there. When we get to heaven we shall know all about this wonderful tree.

But here in our text, Solomon compares religion to such a tree. He says, "She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her." Religion is compared to a great many different things in the Bible. It is compared to gold, to silver, and to jewels; but here it is compared to a tree of life.

The question for us to consider is, why is

religion like a tree of life? The answer is, that everything you would expect to find in such a tree, to help or comfort you, can be found in religion. Now let us look at some of these things, and we shall see that they are the very things we find in religion.

*And the first thing we should expect to find in such a tree, is* SHELTER.

When it begins to rain, or when we see a storm gathering, and there is no house near, how naturally we run to the nearest tree for shelter from the rain. I say it is natural to do this. But it is not safe. It is always better to stay out in the open field, even though you get wet through, than to run under a tree in a thunder-storm. For the lightning will often strike a tree and kill persons under it, when they would be safe in the field. Still, I say it is natural, when a person is out in the rain, to run to a tree for shelter. And so if a flood of water should come rushing by, or you should see a wild beast near, you would be very likely to run to the nearest tree, and try to find shelter among its branches. Many a

traveller, when exposed to danger, has found shelter and safety for the night, in the protecting branches of some shady tree.

We read about a tribe of people, in the south of Africa, whose country is much infested with poisonous serpents, and who actually build their little houses up among the wide-spreading branches of large trees, and live there most of the time. Those people truly find shelter in their trees.

We read in history of one of England's kings, Charles the second, whose life was saved by the shelter he found in a tree. He had been defeated in battle, and was obliged to flee from his enemies. With a single officer, he was separated from all his friends. They plunged into a thick wood. Their enemies pursued them. Selecting a large oak-tree, with very thick foliage, they climbed up and hid themselves among its branches. Their pursuers passed directly under the tree. The poor king and his companion saw them searching about for him, but they were hidden from view by the leaves of the tree.

Thus the King of England's proud realms found shelter in a tree. That tree stood for long, long years afterwards, and was always called the *royal oak.*

And religion is compared to a tree of life, because it is a *sheltering* thing. It protects those who take hold of it. Hence we read, in one place in the Bible, "The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him." Deut. 33: 12. The Bible tells us that God holds his people in the hollow of his hand, and keeps them as the apple of his eye. Can anything be safer than that which is held in the shut-up hand of God? Can anything be more sheltered than the eye of God?

When Satan wanted to injure the patriarch Job, because he was such a good man, he found that God had put a hedge about him, and about all that he had, on every side, so that he could not get near him, nor touch a single hair of his head, till God gave him leave. And God does the same thing for all his people. They are all safe in his care. "The tree of life," of which they have

taken hold, is a sheltering tree to them. A converted Indian was one day attacked by a savage, who presented a gun to his head, exclaiming, "Now, I'll shoot you, for you speak of nothing but Jesus." The man replied, "If Jesus does not permit you, you can't shoot me." The savage was so surprised at this answer that he dropped his gun, and went home in silence.

During a time of religious persecution a good Christian minister was fleeing from his enemies, who were seeking to put him to death. In trying to escape he entered an empty house and crept into an oven, to hide himself. As soon as he was in, a spider came and wove its web across the mouth of the oven. When his pursuers were searching the house they passed hastily by the oven, without stopping to examine it. "Look at that spider's web," said one of them; "nothing has gone in there for several days." Oh, how easily God can shelter his people!

Even people who are not Christians themselves often feel that it is a safe thing to be among true Christians.

Some time ago a lawyer, from Philadelphia, was travelling in one of the Southern States. He had been riding all day, and night came on before he could find a public house to stop at. He was obliged to turn into a house, on a solitary plantation, and ask for shelter and lodging for the night. He was invited to come in and share their fare. In the course of the evening he thought he saw something in the master of the house which he did not like. His suspicions were awakened, and he began to feel uncomfortable. At length he was led to the chamber in which he was to sleep. It was a room adjoining that which the family occupied. He had a large sum of money with him, and he began to think to himself that perhaps the people he was staying with were bad, dishonest people. "Here I am," said he to himself, "in this lonely place. If these people choose to murder me while I am asleep, and take my money, what is to hinder them? I can get no help here, and in the darkness of the night I cannot get away!" Of course, thoughts like these made

him feel very uncomfortable. He resolved to barricade the room, and sit up all night, so as to be ready to defend himself as well as he could, in case he should be attacked. He fastened down the windows, and against the doors he piled up tables and chairs and everything that was movable in the room. While he was thus engaged, the sound of a voice speaking in a low tone, in the next room, fell upon his ear. This increased his alarm. He thought, to be sure, they were whispering their plans together for his destruction. He placed his ear to the keyhole, but it was the voice of prayer that he heard. The family were kneeling before the mercy-seat, and the father was leading them in prayer. As he was stooping with his ear to the keyhole, he heard these words, in a low, earnest voice, — "O God, bless the stranger whom thy providence has brought to lodge beneath our roof to-night." When the prayer was over, the traveller rose from his stooping position. And oh, what a change had come over his feelings! His fears had all van-

ished. He removed the barricade which he had piled up against the door, and felt entirely at ease. For though not a Christian himself, he knew that the prayers of Christians are like guardian angels to the place in which they are offered up; and he went to bed, and slept soundly and sweetly, feeling that the house where God was feared and worshipped *was a safe house to sleep in.* The father of that family had taken hold of the tree of life, and he found *shelter* in it. It sheltered *him*; it sheltered *his family;* and it sheltered *the stranger* who lodged beneath his roof, even though he had not taken hold of that tree himself. The first thing we find in religion, on account of which it may be compared to a tree of life, is *shelter.*

*The second thing we find in religion, considered as a tree of life, is* FOOD.

Of course, I am speaking of food for the *soul*, and not for the body. The things that religion furnishes are intended chiefly for our souls. Religion does good to the *bodies* of men, but its principal blessings relate to our

souls. And the food which this tree of life furnishes is food for the soul.

We are not accustomed, in this country, to think of trees as furnishing us with our principal supply of food. When we talk about food for our bodies, we think about our markets, with the abundance of meats and vegetables which they furnish; or of the fields where the grain grows on which we depend for our bread. But this is not the case in all places. There are some countries where the people depend mainly on the trees, for their supply of food.

In the South Sea islands there are two trees on which the natives rely chiefly for their food; these are the bread fruit tree and the cocoa-nut tree. The bread fruit tree is a very remarkable tree. Its fruit is a large green berry, resembling a cocoa-nut or melon in size and form. When ripe, this fruit becomes soft, tender, and white, and resembles the inside part of a loaf of wheat bread. Its taste is very much like that of a roasted potato. It is usually cut into several

pieces, and roasted or baked, in an oven, in the ground. This fruit furnishes the principal article of food, to the inhabitants of the Society and other South Sea islands. An agreeable drink is also obtained from the fruit of this tree.

The cocoa-nut tree we know more about than we do of the other tree we have just been speaking of. Its trunk shoots up to the height of fifty or eighty feet, without any branches below the top. The nuts grow at the top of the tree in bunches of eight or ten. The tree blossoms about once in six weeks during the rainy season, and every time it produces a fresh crop of fruit, so that each tree yields about a hundred nuts a year. The kernel of the nut, or the soft white substance on the inside of the shell, furnishes to the natives a wholesome article of food, while each nut contains one or two pints of a sort of juice or milk, which makes an agreeable drink.

These trees, you see, furnish to the natives of the country in which they grow, both meat

and drink. They may truly be called *trees of life* to the people of those islands. They depend on them to support the life of their bodies.

And just such "a tree of life" religion is to our souls. It furnishes us with our supply of food. It gives both meat and drink for our souls to live upon. You know that, when the children of Israel were travelling through the wilderness, God fed them with manna. It is calculated, that, to feed all that great company, over ninety-four thousand bushels of manna were required every day. And yet, for forty years, or fourteen thousand six hundred days, this large amount was furnished day after day, and never failed. That manna represented Christ. He was the tree of life which furnished all that great multitude with the food their bodies required.

Then God made a stream of water to burst out from a rock for their use. That stream followed them about, as they went from place to place, so that they always had water to drink. And this stream represented Christ. He was a tree of life to the children of Israel in the wilderness,

because he furnished them food. The meat and the drink on which their bodies lived all came from him. And Jesus is a tree of life to our souls for just the same reason. He is called "the true manna." He is compared, in the Bible, to both bread and water. Jesus calls himself, in one place, "the bread that came down from heaven." And he says, that those who eat of this bread will "never hunger," and that they "will live forever." And then, in another place, he says he will be, in his people, like "a well of water, springing up unto everlasting life."

Thus we see that Jesus is both meat and drink to his people. You all know what food and drink are to the body. You eat bread and drink water, and they make your body strong, and keep it alive. And just so when we *think* about Jesus, and *love* him, and *believe* on him, then our souls may be said to *feed* on him. He becomes meat and drink to them. He makes them strong, and keeps them alive. Most of you, perhaps, have read a very sweet tract called "The Shepherd of Salisbury Plain." The

name of that pious shepherd was David Saunders. In talking with a friend, one day, he said, "I have led but a lonely life, in great poverty. I have often had but little to eat; but my Bible has been meat, and drink, and company to me; and when want and trouble have come upon me, I don't know what I should have done, indeed, if I had not had the promises of this book for my stay and support."

Thus we see that the second thing we find in religion, on account of which it may be called the tree of life, is *food.*

*But there is a third thing found in religion which makes it proper to compare her to a tree of life, and this is* MEDICINE.

Jesus is often spoken of as "the Great Physician." His word, the Bible, is the medicine which he uses. It cures all the diseases which sin brings upon our souls. Hence, in one place in the book of Psalms, we read, "He sent his word and *healed* them." Ps. 107: 20. One of the names given to Jesus in the Old Testament is Jehovah-Rophi. This means

*the Lord that healeth*, or the God-man healer. The prophet Jeremiah speaks of him as a physician, and calls his grace, or his religion, "the *balm* of Gilead." Jer. 8 : 22.

You remember, when the Israelites were coming up out of Egypt, they came to a place called Marah; and, when they tried to drink the water from the wells there, they found it so bitter that they could not drink it. They were greatly in need of water, and likely to perish with thirst for the want of it. But God showed Moses a particular kind of a tree, which he told him to throw into those wells of bitter, poisoned water. He did so, and immediately the water was made sweet, so that they could drink it with pleasure. Now sin has poisoned the sources of our enjoyment, the wells out of which our souls must drink. The water in them is bitter. But religion is the tree of life. If we lay hold of this, and put it in the wells of which we drink, it will sweeten the waters. It has power to heal all the poisonous effects of sin upon our souls. When St. John saw the tree of life in the

golden streets of the heavenly Jerusalem, he said it "bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the *healing* of the nations." And religion, the tree of life spoken of in our text, has a wonderful healing power. The dying thief took hold of this tree, when he was hanging on the cross, by the side of Jesus. It did not save his body from dying, but, what was far better, it healed his soul from the dreadful disease of sin, and made him fit to go to heaven. And whenever a person's heart is changed, and he becomes a Christian, he may be said "to take hold of the tree of life," and the leaves from this tree heal the wounds which sin has made on his soul.

In the East Indies, they have one of the most dangerous serpents known in the world. It is called the Cobra de Capello, or the hooded serpent. This name is applied to it because it has the singular power, when it is angry, of raising up and spreading out the skin on the back of its neck in such a way as

to look just as if it had a hood on its head. It is not as large as some other serpents, but its poison is most deadly. Everything bitten by it dies in a very little while. They increase and multiply so rapidly that it would be almost impossible for people to live in the countries infested by them, if it were not that God has provided an enemy to the cobra which destroys them in great numbers. This enemy is a little animal called in India the gentoos. It is something like the weasel. It is as active as the monkey, as cunning as the fox, and yet as fierce as the tiger. There seems to be nothing in the world which this little creature likes better than to fight the cobra. The moment a gentoos sees a cobra he flies at him like lightning, and then a terrible battle takes place. The gentoos fastens its sharp teeth in the neck of the cobra, and the cobra writhes and twists itself about, and tries to bite its enemy with its deadly, poisonous fangs. Presently it gets a chance to do this, and darts its fatal venom into the body of its tormentor. As soon as the gentoos finds itself

bitten, it loosens its hold upon the cobra, and runs into the woods close by, where it finds a plant, the leaves of which have the power of acting as an antidote, or healing medicine, to the poison of this serpent. He eats one of these leaves. This corrects the poison, or renders it harmless, and then, like a brave little soldier, he rushes at his enemy again, and never stops till he has killed him.

How wonderful it is that God should have provided this healing-plant to help the gentoos in his conflicts with the cobra! And yet God has done something more wonderful still for us. Sin is a dreadful serpent, which we all have to fight. Its poison is of the most deadly kind. It will destroy our souls forever unless it be corrected. But in Jesus we have a tree of life, and the leaves of this tree have power to heal our souls when they have been bitten by the serpent, sin.

I want to tell you a story about a little boy who took hold of this tree of life, and was enabled, thereby, to cure his father of the dreadful disease of drunkenness. This little fellow

was only about seven years old. His father's habits of drinking had made the family poor, and their home miserable. One day a person gave the little boy a temperance tract. In reading over the tract he met with this sentence: — "If a child have a drunken parent, he should go without strong drink for his parent's sake." He resolved to do this. They were in the habit of having beer on the table, to drink, every day at dinner. He asked his mother if he might have water to drink, instead of beer. She gladly consented. For days, and weeks, and months, he drank nothing but water. Still it seemed to do no good. But one day he heard his teacher at school say that "nothing we do will accomplish any good, unless we pray for God's blessing upon it!" Then he began to pray, every day, that God would bless what he was trying to do for the good of his father.

One night, he woke about the middle of the night. His father was out at the public house, and all the rest of the family were fast asleep. He got out of the little bed and knelt down

and prayed for his poor father. Just as he was doing this, his father, who had got in with a latch-key, was passing up stairs, in a half-drunken state, on his way to bed. Hearing a noise, as of some one speaking in his little boy's room, he stopped to listen, and heard his son thus praying, in earnest tones, mingled with many sobs and tears: — "O Lord, please to bless me! please to bless my going without beer; and O Lord, please to bless my dear father, and help him to quit drinking strong drink, for Jesus Christ's sake! Amen."

This short, simple prayer had such an effect upon the mind of the father that it sobered him at once, and led him to make a vow that by the help of God he would quit the use of strong drink from that very night. He kept this promise so well that he became a good and sober man, and his home was one of the happiest in all the neighborhood.

When this little boy became religious, he took hold of the tree of life, and his example, and his prayers, like leaves from that tree, were

the means of healing his father's drunkenness, that dreadful wound which the serpent, sin, had inflicted upon him. And so we may well say that the third thing found in religion which makes it proper to compare it to a tree of life, is *medicine.*

*But there is one other thing to be found in religion on account of which it may be likened to a tree of life, and that is* COMPANY.

Now, perhaps, some of you will be ready to say to yourselves, "Company in a tree! what does this mean? To talk about shelter, or food, or medicine in a tree seems natural enough. But to talk of company in a tree sounds rather odd?" Let us look at it a moment, and see if it is not natural enough. Suppose you are in the country, with several of your best friends. You are boarding at different farm-houses in the neighborhood. But you want often to get together, and talk over different things, and enjoy each other's company. Well, under the brow of the hill, or by the edge of the woods, there is a fine, large, shady chestnut tree, with benches round

its trunk. It is a cool, pleasant, shady place. You agree with your friends to go *there*, at a certain hour, every day. That is your meeting-place. When you think of that old tree, you always think, what pleasant company you have had there! Perhaps it is about sundown when you meet there, and, as you start to find your friends at the well-known spot, you hasten forward, humming to yourself the familiar lines, —

> "Come, come, come, —
> Come to the sunset tree."

You have pleasant company at that tree. It is a great thing to have good company. But the best company in the world is to have God with us, as our father and friend. He is the best company, because he can be with us at all times. Nothing can separate us from him. By night or by day, wherever we are, he can keep us company. This cannot be the case with father or mother, with brother or sister, or any other friend.

You remember that, when Jesus was about

to be crucified, we read that "all his disciples forsook him and fled." Just before this occurred, he told his disciples that, in a little while, they would all go away and leave him alone. But he added, "and yet I am not alone, for the *Father is with me.*" He had good company in him. And so we shall have, if God is with us. But when will God come to us, as our friend, and keep company with us? Why, only when we take hold of Jesus as the tree of life. I mean by this, only when we give our hearts to Jesus, and really love and serve him. If we consider Jesus as the tree of life, then this tree is the meeting-place between God and us. And oh, we shall have sweet and pleasant company then! This was what Jesus meant when he said, "If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and *make our abode with him.*" Ah! there must be royal nice company, when the blessed Saviour and his adorable Father are taking up their abode, and dwelling in the hearts of persons! This "tree of life" is the place where this good company

is to be found. If we have this company, and really feel that Jesus and his Father are with us, we shall never feel lonely, and never be afraid. If Jesus is with us keeping us company, there is no reason why we should feel afraid by night, any more than by day. If Jesus is with us, we are just as safe in the dark as in the light; just as safe by ourselves as when there are hundreds around us.

A wife and two little children left home on a visit. When her husband came home to tea, and sat down at the table with no mamma, and no two bright-eyed little girls to love and welcome him, strange to say, he did not feel alone. He took off his slippers, and sat down in his rocking-chair all by himself. He went to bed. There was the empty crib, but still he did not feel lonely. He got up in the morning, and ate a solitary breakfast, and yet there was no loneliness. He had the society of sweet and pleasant thoughts about his absent loved ones. He seemed to feel his God and Saviour very near to him, and this made good company for him. And yet he was very much

surprised at himself. He expected to have felt very lonely when his family were all away. Of course, he missed them very much, but he had no lonely feeling ; and he hardly knew how to account for it. The first letter he received from his wife, however, explained it all. She told him that on the evening of the day on which they had left home, just as she was about to kneel down and pray with the children, before putting them to bed, the youngest little girl, only three years old, said to her, —

" Mamma, wont you please tell God that we left papa alone ? "

This was the secret of the comfortable feeling of that solitary husband and father. His wife and children had told God that he was alone, and had prayed that he might not feel lonely. God had heard their prayer, and it was *his* presence which made him feel that he was not alone.

A gentleman was one day visiting some destitute families in one of the poorest parts of London. After climbing a number of stairs,

which led to the top of one of the houses, he saw a ladder, leading to a door, close up to the slates of the roof. He hardly thought anybody could be living up there; but he concluded to go up and see. On reaching the door, he found it so low, that he was obliged to stoop before he could enter. It was so dark that he could not see distinctly, so he called out, —

"Is there any one here?"

"Come in," answered a feeble voice.

He entered, and found a little boy, all by himself, in that dark, wretched home. There was no bed, no furniture of any kind. Some straw and shavings, in one corner, formed the poor fellow's seat by day and his bed by night.

"Why are you here alone?" asked the kind visitor. "Have you a father?"

"Yes, sir."

"Have you a mother?"

"No, sir, mother's in the grave."

"Where is your father? Don't you want him to be with you in this dark, lonely place?"

"No, sir," said the boy, sorrowfully. "My father gets drunk. He used to send me out to steal, and whatever I stole he spent in drinking."

"Does he make you do so still?"

"You see," said the boy, "I went to the ragged-school, and I was there taught the words, 'Thou shalt not steal.' I was told about heaven and hell; that Jesus Christ came to save sinners; that God punishes the bad and loves the good; and then I resolved that I wouldn't steal any more. And now," continued the little fellow, "my father himself steals, and then gets drunk; and then he gets angry at me, and is cruel to me, and beats me, because I wont steal any longer."

"Poor little boy!" said the gentleman, feeling very sorry to hear the boy's sad history. "I pity you very much. You must feel very lonely here, all by yourself, in this dark room."

"No," said the little fellow, with a sweet smile on his face, "I am not alone; Jesus is with me here. I don't feel lonely."

The gentleman took out his purse and gave the boy some money, and promised that he would come and see him again to-morrow.

"Stop, sir," said the little fellow, as his kind visitor was preparing to go down the ladder, "I can sing." And then he began in a sweet, simple strain, to sing the beautiful hymn with which he loved to cheer his solitude: —

"Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
Look upon a little child;
Pity my simplicity,
Suffer me to come to thee!

Fain I would to thee be brought, —
Gracious God! forbid it not;
In the kingdom of thy grace
Give a little child a place!"

The gentleman was so touched with the little boy's sad tale and destitute condition, that the next day he spoke about it to a kind, Christian lady. She was very much interested in the case, and asked him to go with her to the place. This he at once agreed to do. Taking along a bundle of clothes, which might be useful to him, they made their way together

up the dark stairs of the house, till they reached the ladder. On going up the steps, and coming to the door, they knocked, but there was no reply. They knocked again and again, but no reply came; no voice as before, calling, "Come in." The gentleman opened the door and went in. There was the bed, the straw, the shavings, just as he had left them the day before. And there lay the little boy on the bed of straw — *but he was dead!* The body lay there, but the spirit had returned to God who gave it!

Ah! don't you see, my dear children, the tree of life was growing in the dark garret home of that little boy? He took hold of this tree. God met him at the tree. He found *company* at this tree. And so we see that religion may be compared to a tree of life, because *we find company in it.*

Now we have spoken of four things that are found in religion on account of which it may well be likened to a tree of life. The *first of these is shelter;* the *second is food;* the *third, medicine,* and the *fourth, company.*

My dear young friends, I have tried to speak to you about some of the good things connected with this tree of life. My object, in doing this, is to try to persuade you to take hold of it. I have pointed out to you the shelter, and the food, the medicine, and the company to be found in this wonderful tree; but who of you will come and take hold of it, and have all these good things for your own?

One day, a hunter, in search of game, had lost his way in an African forest. He was faint and weary. His attention was attracted by the strange twittering and chattering of a little gray bird on the branch of the nearest tree. It seemed excited about something, and anxious to attract his attention. When it had fairly awakened his interest, it darted before him, in wavy lines, still keeping up its incessant twitter, as if inviting him to follow it. He resolved to do so. He followed it till it led him to a hollow tree. Hovering over this tree a moment, it seemed to point to it with its bill, and then, quietly perching on a neighboring branch, watched his movements. The

hunter resolved to examine the tree; and, on looking into it, he found that a swarm of wild bees had been hiving in that tree, and the hollow of it was well filled with wax and honey. He ate some of the honey, and was strengthened, and soon found his way out of the forest. On inquiring of the natives about this little bird, they told him it was called the honey-bird, and that it seemed to take delight in showing people the trees which had honey in them.

My dear children, I want to be like this "honey-bird" to you. I want to lead you to Jesus, the "tree of life." In him you will find that which is "sweeter than honey, and the honey-comb." David found it so in his day, and it is so still. Oh, seek religion now. "She is more precious than rubies." "She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her." *Shelter*, and *food*, and *medicine*, and *company* are to be found in this tree. May God give you all grace to take hold of it for Jesus' sake. Amen!

# IX.

## The Best Aim.

Do all to the glory of God. — 1 Cor. 10: 31.

# IX.

**Do all to the Glory of God. — 1 *Cor.* 10 : 31.**

Did you ever see a company of soldiers going through their exercises? Well, if you have, you will remember that, after their muskets are loaded, the officer, who is exercising them calls out, "Make ready, — take aim, — fire."

The *aim* of each soldier is the thing which he tries to hit when he fires his gun.

When soldiers are engaged in what is called target-shooting, or firing at a mark, they have a large board set up, at some distance from them. The surface of this board is painted all over in black and white rings or circles. In the centre of the board is a small black circle, sometimes called the bull's-eye. Every soldier, as he takes aim, tries to hit this bull's-eye, or black circle, in the centre of the board. The *aim* of the soldier is that which he tries to hit with his gun.

And in the same way we use the word *aim* as referring to anything a person undertakes to do. If a new scholar enters your class in school, and says to himself, as he enters, "Now I am going to be the head of this class," and if he begins to study his lessons with great diligence and care, so as to get above the others, then you may say the aim of that scholar is to be the head of the class. The aim of Christopher Columbus was to discover a new continent. The aim of Sir John Franklin and his companions, who perished in the Arctic regions, was to find out a passage by sea, from the Pacific to the Atlantic ocean. The aim of Dr. Kane, in his voyage to the north, was to find out what had become of Sir John Franklin. The aim of Dr. Livingstone, in his long journey through Africa, was to find out the best way of carrying the gospel into the interior of that vast country.

There are a great many aims that people set before them in this world. Some aim to get great riches; others to get a great name; and others to enjoy great pleasure. But St. Paul

tells us of an aim that is much better than any of these. He says, "Whether ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, *do all to the glory of God.*" But how can we do anything to the glory of God? Readily enough. It is not only by great things, such as none but an angel can do, that God may be glorified; it is by *little things* as well. You see, St. Paul speaks, in the verse in which our text is found, of *eating*, and *drinking*, so as to glorify God. Of course if it is possible for us to glorify God while eating our daily meals, then we may glorify Him in everything. We may really learn to "do *all* to the glory of God."

But when may we be said to eat and drink to the glory of God? Let me show you. Here, for instance, is the home of a poor, but pious family. The table is spread, and they are about to sit down to dinner. The provision is very plain and simple. Before they begin to eat, there is a moment's pause. The father of the family clasps his hands and says, "O Lord, thou art the giver of all good things. We thank thee for the food now

before us. Bless it to our use, and make us thy children, for Jesus' sake. Amen!" Then they eat their meal in thankfulness. That is eating and drinking to the glory of God. And all that we do from a desire to please God, and because it is his will, is done to the glory of God. Everything that does what God made it for, glorifies him. The sun, when it rises in the morning, and goes shining brightly on its course, glorifies God. The moon, when it walks in silent majesty through the heavens, glorifies God. The stars, as they twinkle in the quiet sky; the gentle breeze, as it sighs through the woods, or ruffles the surface of the lake; the birds, as they sing among the branches of the trees; the rains that fall from heaven and water the earth; the dews that distil upon the plants; the little flower that opens its beautiful leaves in the corner of the garden, and the tender grass that springs up unnoticed by the wayside, — all these glorify God, by doing and being just what He wants them to do and be. And *we* may all glorify him in the same way.

There are many aims that people set before them in life, many things that they are striving to do; but, to "do all to the glory of God" is *the best aim.* It is so for four reasons. To try to glorify God, in all we do, is the best aim; —

*In the first place, because it is* THE MOST PROPER AIM.

And there are two reasons why it is so. To try to promote God's glory is the most proper aim we can have in life, *because we were made for this.* The Bible tells us that "the Lord hath made all things for himself." Prov. 16 : 4. It tells us again, Rev. 4 : 11, that for his "pleasure," or glory, "all things were created." Now, what is the most proper thing in the world for any person or thing to do? Why, the thing it was made to do. What is the most proper thing for boys to do with kites? To fly them. Yes, for they are made to fly. What is the most proper thing to do with balls, and hoops, and marbles? To play with them. Yes, they were made to play with. What is the most proper thing for

girls to do with dolls? To dress and nurse them. Yes, they were made to be dressed and nursed. What is the most proper thing for a hungry man to do with bread? To eat it. Certainly. Bread was made to be eaten. What is the most proper thing for a thirsty man to do with cold water? To drink it. To be sure. The water was made to be drunk. What is the most proper thing for a tired and weary man to do with a nice bed or couch? To lie down and rest upon it. Just so. The couch was made to rest on. What is the most proper thing for a sick man to do with medicine? To take it, and get well. Yes, medicine was made for this purpose. What is the most proper thing for a rich man to do with his money? Give it to the poor. Yes, God gives rich people money for this very purpose; but they don't always use it in this way. What is the most proper thing for the sun to do? Shine. Yes, God made the sun to shine. What is the most proper thing for the wind to do? Blow. Of course; God made the wind to blow. What is the most

proper thing for the rain to do? Come down and water the earth. God made the rain for this. What is the most proper thing for the plants in the garden to do? To grow for the use of men. Yes, God made them for this. What is the most proper thing for the grass to do? Look fresh and green, and cover the earth like a carpet. Exactly. God made the grass to do this very thing. What is the most proper thing for the flowers to do? Bloom in beauty, and spread their fragrance around. Certainly. This is what the flowers were made for. What is the most proper thing for cows to do? Eat grass and yield milk. Cows were made to do this. What is the best thing for bees to do? Fly around and gather honey. This is the bee's business in the world. And what is the most proper thing for men, and women, and children to do? To love and serve God. To do all things to his glory. Yes, yes, this *is* so. Men, women, and children were made for this very purpose. And if all people would try and do this, it would make our earth like heaven.

What is the difference between a good man and a bad man? — between a Christian and one who is not a Christian? — between an angel in heaven, and a devil in hell? It is just this; the good man, the Christian, and the angel, each tries to do what God made him for. The bad man, the man who is not a Christian, and the devil, does *not* try to do what God made him for. That is the whole difference between them.

My dear children, you were *made* to glorify God. This, therefore, is the most proper thing in the world for you to do.

But there is another reason why this is the most proper thing in the world for us to do, and that is, *we can all do it.* I don't mean to say that we can do it of ourselves. What I mean is, that if we begin right, and ask God to help us, then we can all do it. There are some things we might be asked to do that we are not strong enough to do; some we are not rich enough to do; and some that we could not do if we were ever so strong, or ever so rich.

Suppose some one should give you a pav-

ing-stone, and ask you to crush it to pieces in your hand; or point to a barrel of flour, and ask you to lift it up, and carry it on your head; you would say, at once, "I can't do it. I haven't strength enough for that." Suppose some friend should want you to lend him five hundred dollars, when five dollars was all you had; you couldn't do it, simply because you hadn't got the money to lend. But if you only had more strength, you might be able to crush the stone in your hand, or carry the barrel of flour on your head; and if you only had more money, you might be able to lend your friend the five hundred dollars he wanted to borrow. Suppose, however, some one should ask you to hold your hand in the fire, and yet not let it be burned; this would be impossible. If you had all the strength of Samson, and all the riches of Solomon, you never could do this. But whether we have little strength, or great strength, little money, or much money, or no money at all, we can glorify God. Angels can glorify him in heaven, and men, and women, and children can

glorify him on earth. All sorts and conditions of people may do it. Kings may glorify God on their thrones, and princes in their palaces. Governors and rulers may do it in public, and subjects and citizens may do it in private. The rich may do it in their splendid houses, and so may the poor in their plain ones. The merchant may do it in his counting-house, the mechanic in his work-shop, and the tradesman behind his counter. The farmer may do it as he ploughs his fields, the sailor as he steers his vessel over the sea, the beggar as he sits by the wayside, and the boy or girl however young or however poor, if they only believe God's word and try to do his will.

While the yellow fever was raging in New Orleans, one summer, a little boy was seen, one morning, lying on the grass in one of the streets. A kind-hearted gentleman noticed him, in passing, and asked him what he was doing there. "Waiting for God to come for me," said the boy. The gentleman was touched by the sorrowful tones of the child.

He saw, too, that the fever was already upon him. "What do you mean, my child?" he asked. "God sent for mother and father, and little brother," said he, "and took them away to his home in the sky; and mother told me before she went, that God would take care of me. I have no home, and no one to give me anything; so I came out here, and have been looking so long up in the sky, for God to come and take care of me, as mother said he would. He will come, wont he, sir? Mother never told me a lie."

"Yes, my child," said the gentleman, hardly able to speak, for his feelings, "God has sent me to take care of you. A beautiful smile lighted up the child's face as he said, "I knew that God would send for me!" That dear child glorified God by trusting in him, and God took care of him.

We *are made to glorify God;* and *we can all do it.* To glorify God, then, is the most proper aim. *It is the best aim, in the first place, because it is the most proper.*

*But, secondly, it is the best aim because it is* THE MOST PROFITABLE.

If you are in business, and want to find out how much profit you are making, you reckon up, what? Not how much money you have taken in and paid out, — how much has passed through your hands during the year, — but, at the end of the year, when all your expenses are paid, how much you have left, to call your own. And this is just the way in which we should judge of the profitableness of the different courses men pursue, or the different aims they set before them, in life. We must look at the end of their lives, and see what they have left *then*, if we would know what profit they have gained.

Now let us look at some men who have taken a different aim from this we are speaking of, and then at one or two who have taken this aim, and see which are the best off at the end of life; which have made the most profit.

During the reign of Henry the Eighth, of England, there lived a celebrated man known as Cardinal Wolsey. His parents were poor, but he contrived to get an education, and con-

cluded to enter the ministry of the Romish Church. This was before the time of the Reformation. Wolsey was a very talented man. He became a priest, then a bishop, then archbishop, and then cardinal. This is one of the highest offices in the Church of Rome, next to the pope. Wolsey's aim in life was to become pope. He did everything in his power to gain this great honor. He was the chief minister, and favorite of King Henry. The king heaped the honors and wealth of the kingdom upon him. He lived in a magnificent palace, in the greatest possible splendor. Everybody envied him. Charles V., the Emperor of Germany, promised, three times, after the death of three different popes, to have him elected to that office; but he never did it. At last King Henry became displeased with Wolsey. He removed him from his high office. He took his honors and wealth away from him. Disappointed and disgraced, he retired to a monastery, and died in sorrow, poverty, and shame. On his death-bed he said to one of his friends, "Oh, had I

but served my God with half the zeal with which I have served my king, he would not have forsaken me in my old age!"

Had Wolsey much profit left at the end of life, from the aim he set before him?

And then look at Napoleon Bonaparte. His aim was to be a great warrior and a great monarch. He *became* a great warrior. And what is a great warrior? A great *murderer*. Napoleon probably killed more people than any other man that ever lived. I don't mean, of course, that he killed them with his own hand, but he caused them to be killed in his wars. Yet he covered himself with glory, in the eyes of men. Wherever he went, at the head of his armies, he conquered. He gained the crown of France. Then he went on to gain others. He gave thrones away to his relations and friends. He played with crowns as a child plays with his toys. All Europe obeyed his nod, and trembled at his frown. Princes and kings thronged his courts. He seemed to rise higher, in power and glory, than any mortal man had ever risen before. But at last

there came a change. His throne began to totter. Like the frost-work on the window-pane, on a winter's morning, when the sunbeams fall upon it, his visions of glory all melted away. He was defeated at Waterloo. Then his power was broken. He was taken captive. For years he was a lonely prisoner, on a little island in the middle of the ocean. His crown was gone. His kingdom was gone. His splendid armies and the multitudes of his followers were all gone. He who had made so many widows and orphans was himself deprived of his wife and son. Disappointed and chafed, like a chained lion, he became weary of life. He was gloomy and melancholy. Well he might be! He sickened and pined for death. "Why," he would sometimes exclaim, "why did the cannon-balls spare me to live and die in this miserable manner? I am no longer the Great Napoleon. How am I fallen! I, whose activity was boundless, whose mind never slumbered, have scarcely energy enough left to raise my eyelids! But *then*, I was *Napoleon*; *now*, I am

*nothing*." And when the hour of death came, how sad it was! A tremendous storm was raging as he lay on his dying bed. But he was all unconscious. He was dreaming of fighting his battles over again. Just before he died, he was heard calling on some of his generals, saying, — "Advance! — hasten! — press the charge! — victory is ours." And so the spirit of the great warrior, all stained with the blood of more than a million of his fellow-creatures, went to stand in solemn judgment before God! Who would care to be Napoleon then?

He hit the mark he aimed at; but was it profitable to him? Millions on millions of money passed through his hands during the business of the day, but when he came to the reckoning at night, what had he left? Nothing. Yes, and worse, much worse than nothing.

Now, let us look at one who set before him the glory of God, the *best aim* of which we are speaking. Take St. Paul himself for an example. When he became an apostle, he set

out to "do all to the glory of God." It cost him the loss of all his earthly possessions and prospects. His friends all forsook him. His enemies were numerous and cruel. They persecuted him wherever he went. Stripes, bonds, and imprisonments met him everywhere. He lived a life of poverty and toil. But he was as happy as the day was long. At midnight, in the dungeon, he could sing for joy. He preached the gospel to the ends of the earth. He left writings which have been a blessing to the world in every age. At last, the cruel Nero seizes him, and puts him in prison at Rome. He is condemned to die a bloody death. But is he gloomy and sad? Do we find the great apostle mourning, like the great warrior, over his unhappy lot? Ah, no. The last words he wrote from his prison, just before his execution, are words of joy and gladness. These are they: "The hour of my departure is at hand; and I am ready to be offered. I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of

righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me." Paul hit the mark he aimed at. And when he came to reckon up his accounts at the close of the day, he found himself, — oh, how rich in the gain he had secured! Aiming to "do all to the glory of God" is the best aim because it is *the most profitable.*

*It is the best aim, in the third place, because it is the* MOST SATISFYING.

People often aim at things which yield them no satisfaction even when they get them.

There was a miserly man in England, some time ago, who resolved to be rich. With great effort and self-denial he increased in wealth, till he was worth several millions of dollars. Then he hit the mark he had aimed at. Yet, when the owner of all that money, he wore clothes so ragged that he would sometimes be mistaken in the streets for a common beggar. He would often start from his sleep at night, exclaiming, "My money! my money! You shan't rob me of my money!" In the midst

of his millions he lived and died in the greatest misery.

Catharine, the Empress of Russia, hit the mark she aimed at, when she was married to the Emperor: but she found herself so unhappy in her position that she busied herself in building a splendid palace of ice to keep her thoughts from dwelling on her own misery.

Lord North, a celebrated statesman of England, tried for years to rise to the position of the prime-minister. This is the highest office in the kingdom. *That* was the thing he aimed at. He obtained it. When the king gave him the seal of office he said: "Here, take this, you will find it *heavy*." Afterwards this gentleman confessed to a friend that he hardly had one happy or contented moment all the time he held that office.

Some years ago there was a lady in England, known to all the nobility and gentry of the kingdom as Lady Hester Stanhope. The object that she aimed at was to be known as a fashionable beauty. She was perhaps the most beautiful woman in England, and *very proud*

of her beauty. She was rich too, as well as beautiful. Mr. Pitt, the great statesman, was her uncle. She was a great favorite with the king. She was invited to the palaces of the great. Princes and nobles admired and praised her beauty. She hit the mark she aimed at. But was she satisfied? No. She found herself so unhappy that she resolved to quit her native country in disgust. She retired to a solitary place in a foreign land, and built herself a sort of palace. There she lived far from the world, and far from happiness.

Years after, she was visited there by one who had known her in England as "*the fashionable beauty.*" But what a change had come over her! "She began to cry, and wring her hands," says this person. "Look on me;" she said, "what a lesson I am of the vanity of this world! Look at this arm, all skin and bone, so thin that you may see through it. It was once so round and plump that you could not pinch the skin up. My neck was once so fair that a pearl necklace scarcely showed upon it. Men, not fools, but sensible men, ad-

mired my neck and skin, and said, I might well be proud of them. What would they say if they could see me now, with my teeth all gone, and long lines upon my face? I am but a worm, a poor miserable thing!" What an illustration this woman affords of that passage of Scripture which says, "Beauty is vain, and favor is deceitful." She hit the mark she aimed at, but she found no happiness in it.

About a hundred years ago a rich planter died in the West Indies. He had but one child, a boy about ten years old. To him the dying father left all his immense fortune. The income of his estate was about half a million of dollars a year. This went on increasing till that boy, whose name was William Beckford, became of age. He was then, perhaps, the richest man in the world. He was certainly *one* of the richest. But he held and used his money without any thought of pleasing or glorifying God. He aimed to be known and distinguished by the magnificent style of his living. He hit the mark he aimed at, but see what satisfaction he found in it.

When he travelled, he travelled like a king with a great company of followers He always sent on beforehand and had the rooms he was to occupy, fitted and furnished in the grandest possible manner. The splendid mansion which his father had built for his residence in England, at a cost of over a million of dollars, did not suit him ; so he resolved to pull it down, and build one that should be the pride and wonder of England. He set this before him as his aim. He made that splendid palace his idol. It was known as Fonthill Abbey. Almost every laborer in the county was employed upon it. Between four and five hundred men were kept at work upon it both night and day till it was finished. The night laborers used immense numbers of torches, which made it look like a fairy scene. Beckford's principal delight was to watch the progress of the work. He would go, at night, to some high part of the grounds, and spend hours in watching the strange sight of the dancing lights, and the reflection of their glare from the surrounding woods.

When the Abbey was completed he built a great wall, nearly twenty miles in circumference, all around his grounds. Within this scarcely any visitor was allowed to pass. Permission was refused to princes, and even to the king, when he wished to visit it. There he dwelt alone, in sullen grandeur. Painting and statuary, all that art and skill could furnish, or wealth could procure, was employed to beautify and adorn the place. Gold and silver vases dazzled the eye, and cabinets, and ornaments of every kind, enriched and sparkling with jewels and precious stones, from the ruby to the diamond, were there in the greatest profusion.

Yet, splendid as his palace was, Beckford was unhappy in it. He had everything that wealth could purchase. But wealth cannot purchase happiness. *This* was wanting in Fonthill Abbey. Beckford hit the mark he aimed at, but he was not satisfied. And then a change passed over that magnificent scene. There came what business men call "a crash," "a money crisis," in the West Indies. The

princely fortune of that foolish man melted away, like a snow-wreath in the summer sun. He was plunged in debt, and difficulties. The gate that would not open to the king was obliged to open to the sheriff. Fonthill Abbey was sold. It has since crumbled to decay. A heap of rubbish is all that now remains of its former grandeur. The owner of it just saved enough from the wreck of his fortune to keep him from want. He spent a miserable old age at a watering-place. No body loved him; nobody cared for him, nobody pitied him. He hit the mark he aimed at, but he found no happiness in it. You would not call a man satisfied who should *dream* that he was rich, or great. It *seems* like *real* riches, or greatness, which such a man has. But when he wakes up he finds it was *only a dream*. And it is just so with people who do not love God. This life is all a dream to them. When the dream is gone, all they have will go with it.

But those whose aim is to serve and glorify God, find so much happiness in his service

that nothing can tempt them to quit it. David said, he "was *abundantly satisfied* with God's service." The prophet Habakkuk said, "Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be on the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of my salvation." Paul was so well satisfied with Christ that he thought it a great gain to have him, though he lost all he had in the world besides. The martyrs were so well satisfied with the service of Christ that neither whips nor chains, neither prisons nor dungeons, neither torture nor death, could induce them to give it up. How thoroughly satisfying that martyr must have found the service of Christ who could say, even while his body was burning at the stake, "It is a small thing to die *once* for Christ: if it might be, I could wish I might die a *thousand times* for him!

An aged minister had spent his life in the

service of Jesus, trying "to do all to his glory." On his death-bed he used these words, — "Oh, that I had all the world around me, that I might tell them of Jesus. Had I ten thousand tongues and ten thousand hearts, and were they all employed in praising Jesus, I could not tell half his preciousness!"

Those who truly love Jesus feel that they are rich in having him, though they have nothing in the world beside; and they know, too, that without Him they would be poor if the whole world belonged to them. Aiming to "do all to the glory of God" is the best aim *because it is the most satisfying.*

*But there is still another reason why this is the best aim, and that is because it is* THE MOST LASTING.

You all know what it is to drink mineral water. How fresh and sparkling it is when first drawn from the fountain! This we call the *effervescence* of the mineral water. But if you let it stand for a little while, this all passes off; then the water becomes flat and tasteless, and you don't care about drinking any more of

it. You have all seen a locomotive drawing a train of cars. The motion of the train depends upon the steam in the boiler; and the steam in the boiler depends on the fire in the grate. So long as you keep up a good fire, and a full head of steam, the engine works easily, and the train goes bounding on its way. But put out the fire in the grate, and what then? Why, then you will have no steam in the boiler; and then the engine will have no power, and the train will stop.

Now, just what the effervescence is to the mineral water, and just what the fire is to the locomotive, a good aim or object is to us in life. And the trouble with most people is, they don't aim high enough. They set some object before them which cannot last; and when they have hit the mark they aimed at, when they have done the thing set before them, then the effervescence goes off from the water they are drinking; the fire goes out in the engine to which they are attached: the train drags heavily for a while, and then stops. They have nothing else to live for, and they feel no interest in anything.

Alexander the Great set out to conquer the world. That was the aim he set before him. He *did* conquer the world. He hit the mark he aimed at; and then, we are told, he cried because he had no more worlds to conquer. Then the sparkle and foam went off from his glass of mineral water. Then the fire went out from his locomotive. He took to drinking and died.

And this is the case, more or less, with all worldly aims. They are not long enough, or high enough. They don't last. As soon as we hit the mark we aim at, as soon as we reach the object set before us, we get tired, and restless, and want something else. The sparkle and the foam go off from the water we are drinking. The fire goes out in our locomotive, and the train drags heavily on, till death comes and stops it. "We aim too low, if we aim below the skies." But, if we set out to serve Jesus, if we try to "do all to His glory," then we have an aim high enough, and lasting enough to serve us while we live. Then we have something that will make the glass,

out of which we drink, always fresh and sparkling. Then the fire in our locomotive will never be put out while we live. No, nor after death, even. For then we shall go and drink from the fountain of life. And the water of that fountain never loses the foam of its freshness. Then we shall serve God day and night, without weariness, or pain, or sorrow, forever. This is the best aim because it is *the most lasting.*

Thus we have four reasons why glorifying God is the best aim. It is so, *because it is the* MOST PROPER; *because it is the* MOST PROFITABLE; *because it is the* MOST SATISFYING; and *because it is the* MOST LASTING.

I hope, my dear children, you will all set this best aim before you, and live "to the glory of God." But remember one thing; if you really desire to do this you must begin by giving your hearts to Jesus, and becoming Christians. This is the first step to take. If you would "do all to his glory" you *must* begin here. You can't do anything to his glory till this is done. No service of ours can please or

glorify Him till we repent of our sins, and believe on Him, and love Him with all our hearts. This is the right way to begin. If we do this He will help us to serve Him truly. He will teach us the way in which, "whether we eat, or drink, or whatsoever we do, to do all to the glory of God."

# X.

## The Heavenly Home.

I go to prepare a Place for you. — John 14 : 2

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I go to prepare a Place for you. — *John* 14 : 2.

Suppose that you and I were children belonging to a family living in England. And suppose that our father had come over to this country to purchase a farm, and build a house and barn upon it, and get everything ready to make it a comfortable home for us. Before he went away, he told us that as soon as he got it all prepared he was going to come back and take us all there, that we might live with him in that new home. If this were the case with us, how much interest and pleasure we should take in thinking and talking about that home in America, which our father was getting ready for us, and where he was going to take us to live, one of these days. And when we received letters from our father, telling us about that home, — how large the farm was which he had bought, — where it was situated, — how

much of the land was in woods, and how much was cleared, — what sort of fruit trees were growing on it, — what kind of buildings were on it, — how the country looked around, — the character of the people living in the neighborhood,— and various other particulars, — how carefully we should read those letters! How often we should take them out and look over them again! And what great delight we should find in talking among ourselves of everything that our father had told us about the home to which we were going.

Now, my dear children, if we love Jesus, we belong to a great family, of which he is the head or father. He has left his family in this world, and has gone to the heavenly Canaan to prepare a place for us, a blessed, happy home, in which we are to live with him forever. When that place is ready, — when that home is finished, — he will come back again to this world and gather all his family together, and take them to live with him in that glorious home which he is preparing for them. And while he is away from us, Jesus has sent us

many letters, in which he speaks to us about that home. These letters tell us a great many wonderful things connected with our heavenly home. The letters which Jesus has written to us have been printed and bound up together. They make this wonderful book which we call the *Bible*. When you read a chapter in the Bible, you are reading one of the letters which Jesus has written to us, from that world to which he has gone, and where he is preparing for us our everlasting home. The words of our text are taken from one of these letters. Here Jesus says, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." The place which Jesus is preparing for us is our heavenly home. Our sermon, to-day, will be about *The Heavenly Home*. I wish to speak of *four* different things which Jesus has told us in his letters about this home.

*And the first thing that I would speak of which Jesus has told us about this home, is* ITS SIZE.

Many homes in this world are very small. The poor man's home may be a hut or cabin, so small that we wonder how his family can turn round in it. Sometimes the home of a whole family will be a single little room, or perhaps only the corner of a room. And even when these homes are not actually small in themselves, they may yet be small compared with the number of persons who desire to get into them.

There is Girard College, the home for orphans; you know how large a building it is, with those splendid white marble columns all around it. Yet that college is kept full all the time, and there is not room enough in it to hold all the children that want to get into it. And then there is the Church Home, and the Southern Home, and the Foster Home. These are very large buildings. But they are all full. And yet how many hundreds of poor children there are who have no homes; and there is not room enough in any of these homes to take them in. Now the question is, can there be any danger that this will be the case with

our heavenly home? Are we sure it will be large enough to hold all who are going there? What has Jesus said in his letters about the *size* of the home he is preparing for us? This is a very important question. Let us see what answer we can find to it.

There are two places in his letters in which Jesus speaks about this very point. Just before our text in this 14th chapter of John, 2d verse, Jesus says: "In my Father's house are *many mansions*." Here he compares heaven to a large house or building, with a great many rooms in it. And when he says in the text, "I go to prepare a place for you," it means that Jesus is now getting a room or mansion in this great house, made ready for you and for me, if we love him, and for each of his people. Every true servant of Jesus may take up the language of the beautiful hymn we sometimes sing, and say,

> "He is fitting up my mansion,
> Which eternally shall stand;
> For my stay shall not be transient
> In that holy, happy land."

And if that heavenly home is so large, and has so many mansions in it, and if Jesus is preparing one there for each of his people, we need have no fear about there not being room enough for us when we get there.

But there is another place, in one of his letters, in which Jesus speaks more particularly about the size of our heavenly home; I mean in the last two chapters of the Bible. There is more said about this home here than in all the rest of the Bible put together. In this place heaven is compared to a city, and the exact size of it is given to us. Here Jesus tells us that this city will be twelve thousand furlongs each way, in length, and breadth, and height. How many miles will this make? We can easily tell, by a little sum in simple division. You know there are eight furlongs in a mile. Divide twelve thousand by eight, and it gives you fifteen hundred. Fifteen hundred miles will be the length of the city, fifteen hundred miles the breadth of it, and fifteen hundred miles the height of it. But this is such a city as nobody ever saw or heard of.

And this is just what the Bible says. When speaking about heaven it tells us that no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard, and no mind has ever thought of such things as Jesus is preparing for his people in their heavenly home. It is three hundred miles from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh. Now, suppose that you and I should start in a carriage to go from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh, or from Boston to Philadelphia, or from London to New Castle. And suppose that we should travel thirty miles a day; it would take us ten days to get there. But the length of one of the streets that runs through this heavenly city is five times as great as the distance between any of the two places spoken of.

Now, suppose that you and I were at the gate of this heavenly city. There is a golden chariot standing there. An angel invites us to get in, and ride through the city. We get in, and are driven along at the rate of thirty miles a day, gazing in wonder at everything we see. It takes us fifty days to ride through just one single street. When we get through

we ask the angel if we can ride round the outside of the city. He tells us we may. He takes us in his golden chariot. There are four sides to the city. Each side is fifteen hundred miles long. The distance round it, therefore, is *six thousand miles!* We travel thirty miles a day, and it takes us two hundred days to go *just once* round the city. Oh, what a wonderful place that must be! How wonderful for its *size.*

People have been going into it for six thousand years. All the children who have died have gone into it. All who loved and served Jesus have gone into it. And yet we need not fear but that there will be room enough for us. Jesus knows just how many people are going into it. The Bible tells us he has a great book, called the book of life. In that book are written the names of all who are going into this heavenly home. And Jesus is preparing a place for every one of them. If you and I love Jesus it is certain that our names are written in that book. It is certain that Jesus is preparing a place in that heavenly

home for each of us. It will be our *own* home. *Our* names will be graven upon it. The white robes that we are to wear, the crowns of glory to be put on our brows, and the palms of victory to be placed in our hands, are all there,— as the Bible says,—"reserved in heaven for us;" and when Jesus comes again he will give them to us. He will put each of us in the place he has prepared for us — the mansion he has fitted up for us — in our heavenly home. Thus, the first thing about this home that Jesus has told us of is its *size*.

*The second thing that he has told us about this home, is its* RICHES.

It is the richest house, or city, or home that ever was built. When Jesus describes it in the last letter he wrote about it, he only mentions *three* things out of which the whole city is built; these are gold, and pearls, and precious stones.

When men build houses or cities, they must have a great many materials, of different kinds, to put into them. They need bricks and mortar, and wood and stones, and iron and brass,

and lead and glass, and various other things. If we should engage a carpenter to build us a house, and should tell him not to use anything but gold, and pearls, and precious stones, like diamonds and rubies, he wouldn't know what to do. He could use some pearls and precious stones to ornament the parlors with, when the house was done; but, as for *making a house* out of these things, that he never could do. Earthly houses only have those parts that are seen finished off, beautifully. The foundations, and other parts not seen, are made of very coarse, rough materials. But it is very different with the house or city which Jesus is preparing as our heavenly home. The *foundations* of this, down to the very lowest of them, are made of nothing but precious stones. Each of its gates is cut out of one vast pearl. The walls and streets of the city are all made of pure gold, and *nothing else.* Just think of a city *paved* with gold; where the people *walk* on gold, and where the gold is as fine and transparent as glass, so that you can *see through* it. How poor and mean the most splendid pal-

aces of earthly kings become when compared with this! Louis XIV, the King of France, built the palace of Versailles, which cost two hundred millions of dollars; and yet that is only like a stable, or a cow-shed, compared to the heavenly home which Jesus is preparing for us.

A New Zealand chief, whose name was Tamahana, visited England a few years ago. He had become an earnest Christian, was very fond of his Bible, and had his heart very much set on that glorious home, which Jesus is preparing for his people. One day a gentleman took him to see a very beautiful mansion, one of the most elegant and costly in London. The gentleman expected to find him very much astonished and delighted with its splendor and magnificence. To his great surprise, however, Tamahana seemed to be very little interested in what he saw. Then the gentleman began to call his special attention to the costly furniture, brought from all parts of the world, — to the beautiful views from the windows, and so on. The New Zealander heard him for a

while in silence. Then he looked round, and, pointing to the beautiful walls, he said, —

"Ah, my Father's house finer than all this!"

"Your father's house!" exclaimed the gentleman, who knew that his father lived in a poor mud cottage.

"Yes," said Lamahana, "my Father's house finer than this."

And then he took a New Testament from his pocket, and began to read some of St. John's description of this heavenly home, in the last two chapters of the Bible. And if our hearts were only properly set on that glorious home we should feel just as this heathen chief did. Oh, if all the water in the ocean were turned to gold, and every grain of sand upon its shore were a pearl or a diamond, it would be nothing compared to what Jesus has laid out on the home he is preparing for us. The riches of that home are wonderful. This is the second thing that Jesus has told about this home.

*The third thing that he has told us of, about it, is* ITS BEAUTY.

If you ever go to Niagara, you will stand and gaze upon it with delight and wonder. But when you return home from your visit there, if one of your friends should come to you and say, "Tell me what Niagara is like; give me a description of it;" you couldn't do it. You could tell how wide the river is, and how many feet it is from the top of the falls to the bottom. But how Niagara *looks*, and how Niagara makes you *feel* while you are looking at it, you never can tell anybody.

And it is just so with the beauty of our heavenly home. If you were to go and see it, you couldn't tell about it. When the apostle Paul was on earth he was taken up to heaven once. After he came back I suppose his friends expected him to tell all about what he had seen. But he never did. He couldn't do it. He said it was impossible. The beauty of that home is so great that nobody can describe it.

There is a great deal of beauty in *this world*. A day in spring, when the leaves are bursting open, and the flowers are coming out,

and the birds are singing, and the air is balmy, and the sun is bright, — a day in spring is beautiful. The rising sun or the setting sun is beautiful. A moonlight night is beautiful. The world is full of beauty. And yet, *this* world is only the prison-house in which God keeps his disobedient children. And if God's *prison-house* is so beautiful, what will his *palace* be ?

See, here is a beautiful shell. Look, how finely it is polished, how richly it is colored ! No king ever had the walls of his palace as beautiful as this. And yet what is this shell ? It is the home which God made for a poor, insignificant little fish to live in. And if God can afford to make a home so beautiful for his *fish* to live in, what sort of a home will he make for his *children* to live in ? Speaking of this home, in one of his letters, Jesus says, " *Glorious* things are spoken of thee,thou city of our God ! " Psalm 87 : 3. In another place he calls it, " the *perfection of beauty*." We have no perfection of beauty here in this world. Here the ripest fruit will have some

speck upon it. The sweetest rose will have a thorn on the stem, or a worm at the heart of it. The brightest sky will have a cloud upon its surface. The sun itself has dark spots upon its face. There is something or other to mar the beauty of all our brightest things in this world. But there will be nothing to mar the beauty of our heavenly home. Everything will be beautiful there, and it will be "the perfection of beauty."

"Beautiful Zion built above!
Beautiful city that I love!
Beautiful gates of pearly white!
Beautiful temple! God its light!

Beautiful trees forever there!
Beautiful fruits they always bear!
Beautiful rivers gliding by!
Beautiful fountains never dry!

Beautiful light without the sun!
Beautiful days revolving on!
Beautiful worlds on worlds untold!
Beautiful streets of shining gold!

Beautiful heaven where all is light!
Beautiful angels clothed in white!
Beautiful songs that never tire!
Beautiful harps through all the choir!

Beautiful crowns on every brow!
Beautiful palms the conquerors show!
Beautiful robes the ransomed wear!
Beautiful all who enter there!

Beautiful throne for God the Lamb!
Beautiful seat at God's right hand!
Beautiful rest! all wanderings cease!
Beautiful home of perfect peace!"

The third thing that Jesus has told us of about this home, is it *beauty*.

*The fourth thing that Jesus has told us of about this home is* ITS HAPPINESS.

There are many homes in this world that are large, and costly, and beautiful, yet there is no happiness in them. But the heavenly home, which Jesus is preparing for us, will be the happiest place in the universe. Jesus tells us that there will be "*fulness* of joy, and pleasures for evermore."

But it is not the *place* that will make the people happy in this home. Many persons think it will. They think, if they can only get to heaven, they are sure to be happy. Heaven is a *prepared* place, and unless we are prepared

to go there, we could not be happy even in heaven.

For instance; suppose you and I are admitted to a beautiful garden. It is full of the choicest fruits and flowers. Fountains are playing, and rills are running by. There are shady walks, and cool grottos, and everything to make it delightful. The law of the place is that everybody there must keep walking about. There are multitudes of people all walking up and down, and enjoying themselves. Well, you and I are introduced to that beautiful garden. But we each have our ankle out of joint. Every time we put our foot to the ground, it makes us cry out with pain. Now, could we be happy in walking about that beautiful garden in this state? Of course not. We are not prepared for it. We must get our ankle-joint set and made strong, and then we shall be ready to enjoy the pleasures of that beautiful garden.

Again; suppose you and I are introduced to the splendid dining-hall of a king's palace. The table is covered with gold and silver

dishes. These dishes are full of the choicest delicacies. A great company of hungry people are seated round the table. They have been helped to the good things before them and are eating them with great pleasure. Well, you and I are seated at the table, and invited to eat whatever we please. But we are both sick. A burning fever is preying upon us. We have no appetite. The sight of food is painful to us. Now, would it be any pleasure to us to be present at that feast? No. We are not prepared for it. Only well persons and persons with a good appetite, would be happy there. And just so it will be in heaven. It is not the *place* that will make the happiness of heaven, but the *preparation* for it. And there are two things in heaven that we must be prepared for; these are, its *employment* and its company.

The chief employment of heaven is loving and serving God. Those who go there sing his praise, and do his will, and find their chief happiness in doing this. But, unless we really love God more than anything, it wont

make us happy to be praising and serving him; and until this is the case with us, we are not prepared to go to heaven.

Suppose that you and I were going to see a gallery of beautiful paintings. At the door of the place, we meet a blind man waiting to get in. We ask him what he wants to go in for. He says, he has heard people say they had had so much enjoyment there, that he thought he would like to go in, and share the enjoyment. Well, the poor fellow goes in, and takes a seat there. The walls of the building are hung all round with the most beautiful paintings. The people about him are looking at them with the greatest delight. But there sits the poor blind man in total darkness. He cannot see the least trace of all the beauty that is about him. Will he find any enjoyment in going to that gallery of paintings? Not the slightest. And what is the reason? He is *not prepared* for the employment of that place. That employment consists in looking at the paintings which are there. But the blind man can't see them. Therefore he cannot share the happiness of that place.

Or, suppose that we are going to hear a concert of sacred music. On sitting down in the hall, we are surprised to see, sitting next us, a person that we know to be entirely deaf. He cannot hear a sound when the loudest thunder is bursting overhead. How strange that a deaf man should think of going to a concert! But he has read about the pleasure of attending concerts, and he has come to try it for himself. Well, the concert begins. The music is sweet; it is heavenly. We listen to it with raptures of delight. But there is our poor deaf friend. His ear never takes in a single note. Will it afford him any enjoyment to go to that concert? No. And the reason is that he is *not prepared* for it. The employment there is — listening to music. And those who cannot join in the employment cannot share in the pleasure of the concert.

And just so it is with heaven. Unless our hearts are changed, so that we can find delight in loving and serving God, we are not prepared for heaven; and if we could go there in this

state, we should find no more happiness in heaven than the blind man would find in the gallery of paintings, or the deaf man in the concert of music. *We must be prepared* for the employments of heaven if we hope to be happy there.

*And then we must be* PREPARED FOR THE COMPANY OF HEAVEN, *as well as for its employments, if we would be happy there.*

It is not the walls of the building in which you live that makes your earthly home, but the company of those you love.

A little boy about four or five years old was returning from school one day. He bounded into the house, exclaiming, as he hung his hat up in the entry, — "*This* is my *home!* — *this* is my *home!*" A lady, on a visit to his mother, was sitting in the parlor. She said to him, — "Willie, the house next door is just the same as this; suppose you go in there, and hang your hat up in the entry, wouldn't that be your home as much as this?"

"*No*, ma'am," said Willie, very earnestly, "it *would not*."

"Why not?" asked the lady. "What makes this house your home more than that?"

Willie had never thought of this before. But, after a moment's pause, he ran up to his mother, and throwing his arms around her neck, he said, "Because *my dear mother lives here.*"

It is the presence and company of those we love which makes our earthly home; and it is just so with our heavenly home.

A little Sunday-school boy lay upon his dying bed. His teacher sat at the bedside, holding the hand of his scholar.

"I'm going home to heaven," said the little fellow.

"Why do you call *heaven* your *home?*" asked the teacher.

"Because Jesus is there."

"But, suppose," said the teacher, "that Jesus should go out of heaven?"

"Then *I would go out with him*," said the dying child. This dear child loved Jesus. He felt that it was the presence and company

of Jesus that would make heaven feel like home to him. *This* would make him happy there. And, if we love Jesus as we ought, we shall feel so, too. When we think of him we shall be ready to say, —

> "'Tis where *Thou* art is heaven to me,
> And heaven, *without Thee, cannot be.*"

And then the holy angels will be our companions in heaven. And so will all the good people we read about in the Bible. Yes, and all the good people who have lived since then; and all our own dear friends and relations who have loved Jesus here, and died. We shall meet them there. We shall all be holy and good. We shall have no more pain, or sickness, or sorrow. We shall never have to part any more. That glorious place which Jesus is preparing for us will be our home *forever*. In our earthly homes we cannot stay very long. Either the house grows old and decays, and we have to find another; or else those we love die, or move away, and then it doesn't seem like home any more. But this heavenly

home never grows old, or decays. The Bible calls it, "a *continuing* city," "an *eternal* house," "an *unfading* inheritance." And the loved companions who share this home with us will never die, and never change. Oh, what a blessed, happy home that will be!

Thus we have spoken of *four* different things about this home of which Jesus has told us: these are, the *size*, the *riches*, the *beauty*, and the *happiness* of this heavenly home, — this place which he is preparing for us.

A little boy was walking in the fields with his mother, one day. He looked up to the sky and said, "O mother, heaven is so *far off*, I'm afraid I shall never get there."

"My dear," said his mother, "heaven must *come to us*, before we can go to it." He didn't understand what she meant. Then she told him what Jesus said when he was on earth. These were his words: "If any man love me, my Father will love him, and *we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.*" Jesus is willing to come into your

hearts. He is standing and knocking for you to let him in. And when he comes in, he brings heaven with him. He will make a heaven in your heart, if you will let him come and dwell there. But, if we don't let him come and dwell in our hearts *here*, he wont let us go and dwell with him in heaven hereafter. "Heaven must come to us before we can go to it." Oh, let us open our hearts, and ask Jesus to come and dwell in them. This will make us happy, in a way that all the gold and silver in the world can never do And then let us remember that the Bible contains the letters which Jesus has written to us about our heavenly home. Let us love to read those letters. Let us think more about that blessed home. And then when we have any sorrow or trouble here, we shall find great comfort in the thought of that bright and beautiful home.

"Soon will our pilgrimage end here below,
Soon to the presence of God we shall go:
Then, if to Jesus our hearts have been given,
Joyfully, joyfully, rest we in heaven.

Bright will the morn of eternity dawn,
Death will be conquered, his sceptre be gone ;
Over the plains of sweet Canaan we'll roam,
Joyfully, joyfully, safely at home."

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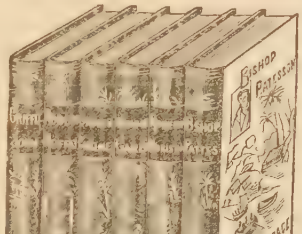


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